

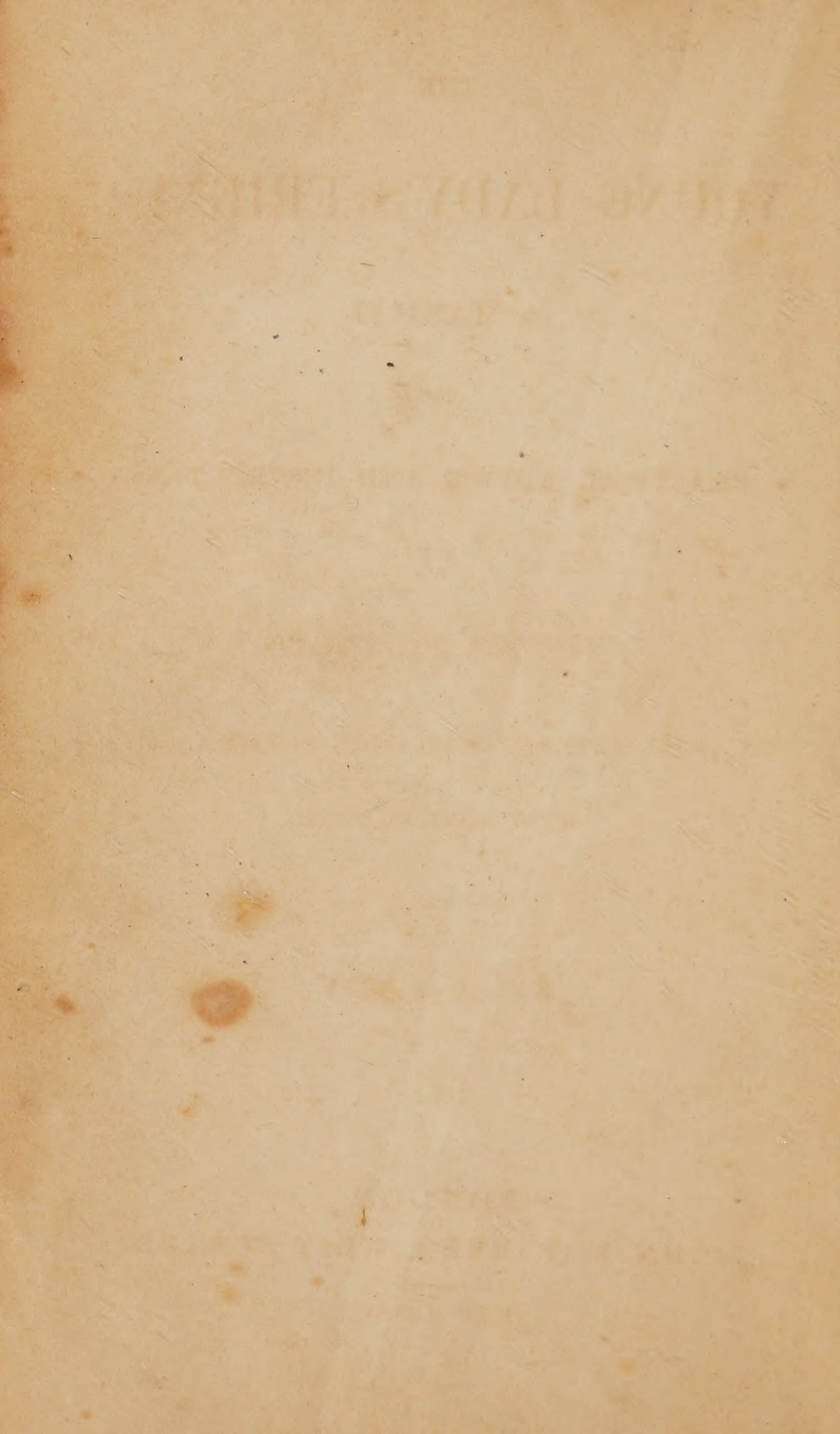
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[FARRAR, E.W.]

C. M. Mayo.



THE
YOUNG LADY'S FRIEND;

A MANUAL

OF

PRACTICAL ADVICE AND INSTRUCTION

TO

YOUNG FEMALES

ON THEIR ENTERING UPON THE DUTIES OF LIFE,

AFTER QUITTING SCHOOL.

BY A LADY.

LONDON:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present volume is a modified reprint of one of the most recent additions to that class of instructive and admonitory books which now forms so marked a feature in the popular literature of America. The original work entered more fully into details, and contained more specific directions upon certain points of practice, than would be deemed necessary in this country; such passages have of course been omitted, and the extent of the original book has thereby been advantageously reduced. With these exceptions, the work is now submitted for the approbation of the British public, in the form and language in which it was put forth by its experienced, talented, and amiable authoress.

LONDON, *January*, 1837.

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THE YOUNG LADY'S FRIEND.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE GREAT MISTAKE.—LEAVING SCHOOL.—USE OF SCHOOL STUDIES.—MISS EDGEWORTH'S OPINION.—FALSE VIEWS. —ADDRESS TO GIRLS LEAVING SCHOOL.—RELIGION THE FOUNDATION OF EXCELLENCE.—SINS OF IGNORANCE.

“ Now that I have quite left school, I shall be my own mistress, and can do as I please all day long. I can walk out in the morning, when the shops and streets are full of people, and having now no lessons to learn, I can go out visiting every evening, if I choose. I mean to keep up my music, and read a little French ; but as to history and geography, grammar and philosophy, I have done with them for ever. There are so many really good novels coming out every day, which one ought to be acquainted with, that they will take up all the time I have for reading, so that I shall have employment enough, and that of the most interesting kind. How happy I shall be, now that I have done going to school !”

Such are the feelings and opinions with which a great many girls regard that epoch of their life, when they cease to attend school, and begin their career as young ladies. Many who read this soliloquy will find in it the echo of what they themselves thought and felt

on that occasion. But if such are their views, their school-education has failed in what ought to be regarded as its chief purpose, and the years thus spent have been wasted. The great business of early education is to form habits of industry, to train the mind to find pleasure in intellectual effort, and to inspire a love of knowledge for its own sake. If you have attended school merely because it was expected of you ; if you have learnt your lessons well for the sake of ranking high among your school-fellows ; if you have regarded your studies as daily tasks to be performed till a certain period, when you will be released from them, you are still *uneducated* ; what you have toiled to commit to memory will soon be forgotten, and your intellectual powers, in consequence of having never been properly called into action, will dwindle away, till it will be matter of wonder to yourselves how you ever performed your school-tasks.

This utter waste of the precious morning of life is sometimes the fault of the teacher, sometimes of the scholar ; in many cases both are wholly unconscious of the sad mistakes they are making. As the business of education comes to be better understood by parents, by guardians, and by children themselves, such fatal errors cannot be persisted in ; and there are already some honourable exceptions. There are schools which the scholar leaves with regret, where a true thirst for knowledge has been given, where habits of intellectual labour have been formed, where the principle of emulation never enters, and knowledge is its own reward. The teachers of such schools are worthy of all praise ; they should be regarded as the benefactors of their race ; the rich and powerful should delight to do them honour ; their profession should rank with the other learned ones ; and, inasmuch as the influence of mothers is greater than that of fathers in forming the characters of their children, the office of wisely developing

the minds of young women should be ranked among the most honourable employments in the land.

But schools the best conducted, and teachers the most competent and beloved, must at last give place to other discipline ; a girl cannot always go to school ; the time of quitting her daily tasks must come ; and when it does, it is an important era in her life. If she belong to the class whom I have first described, it is a season full of danger and temptation ; if to the more fortunate class of well-educated girls, it is still a critical period. The salutary influence of the much-loved and honoured teacher is withdrawn ; the pupil must now depend more on herself than formerly in prosecuting her studies. Self-education begins where school-education ends ; and with this additional responsibility, she is placed in new circumstances of temptation and trial.

A young lady, on leaving school, is expected to take a more important place in her father's house ; she must go into society ; she must perform her part towards the poor, the sick, and the afflicted ; she must assist her mother in domestic affairs ; and, with all these added duties, she must continue her own education. When that has been properly begun, the pupil feels that it can never end but with life ; she will also feel, that what has been done at school is but furnishing her with instruments for carrying on the work. If she has there learnt the French, Italian, and Latin languages, she will consider them as the means by which she is to enrich her mind with the literature of France and Italy ; if she has there read a few abridged histories of various countries, they are to be regarded as a mere introduction to that study of history, which is to enlarge her views of human nature, and give her an insight into the policy of nations and the progress of civilization ; if she has read in school the Lives of Plutarch, they are to serve as standards of comparison for other biogra-

phies, and to be recurred to in reading the history of the times in which those characters lived ; if she has there committed to memory pages of geography, it is that she may have in her mind sketches of countries, which she is ever after to be filling up with additional details ; and so on of all other school-exercises ; they lay the foundation, on which she must be ever after building.

Miss Edgeworth has done much, in her admirable writings for the young, to inculcate this idea, that education must continue all through life. In her " Early Lessons," she ends with this conversation between a brother and two sisters.

" How much reason," said Rosamond, " we have to be grateful to our parents, Godfrey, for giving us strong moral principles, with a steady foundation of religion ; and for making us really good friends, instead of what are called *great* friends."

" Very true," said Godfrey ; " but who would have expected such a really wise and really good reflection, at least from Rosamond ?"

" Everybody who knows her as well as I do," said Laura.

" Well," said Godfrey, " I could tell you, and I could tell Rosamond something."

" Pray tell me, brother ; you must," said Rosamond.

" Then if I must, I will tell you, that there is nobody living, not even yourself, my dear Laura, who has higher expectations of Rosamond's sense and goodness than I have ; though I agree, I own, with old Lady Morral, that Miss Rosamond's education has been going on a great while, and that it begins to be time to think of finishing it. The day after we go home, she will arrive with her old question, '*Ma'am, when will Miss Rosamond's education be finished ?*'"

" And you, I hope, will answer," said Rosamond, " ' Never while she lives.' "

To the young person who does not take this view of intellectual culture, but considers that so many quarters spent at school, and so many books committed to memory, is the termination of the business, that on quitting school she has "finished her education," to use a common phrase, this period is one of great moment and of great danger. Between these two extremes of well and ill-educated girls, there are those of every shade of difference. Some, though very imperfectly trained, have yet been put in the right way; others have laboured long and hard without being so drawn out as to find pleasure in intellectual effort; some have occasionally relished the feast of the wise, but have been called away from it by the voice of pleasure, or the stern command of necessity.

However various the causes that interfere with the grand business of education, all young persons are aware, that at a certain period of their lives they must cease to attend school, and take upon themselves the duties and pleasures of grown women; and it is to this class, at this critical juncture, that I would now offer some assistance in the important task of self-government and self-instruction which then devolves upon them.

Addressing myself, therefore, to girls between the ages of fifteen and twenty, I would say, You are now old enough to reflect upon your own characters, to consider in what respects you are weak, in what you are strong; to perceive your own deficiencies, and to wish to supply them. You are about to enter into society; you naturally wish to make an agreeable impression on those with whom you associate; you have more time than formerly at your own disposal; you are inclined to make rules for yourselves, and wish for some advice as to the arrangement of your occupations; you find yourselves in new circumstances and under new temptations, and you need all the aid and light you

can get in learning to guide yourselves aright, in making the most of this life, and preparing yourselves for the enjoyment of a higher and better.

Those who are blessed with well-educated, judicious, and experienced mothers, and have been brought up in habits of intimate communion with them, have within their reach the best aid, and need only to be urged to mistrust their own inexperience, and seek frequent counsel from that tenderest of friends, a wise mother. But there is a numerous class who, either by bereavement or estrangement, are without this maternal aid, and there are others whose mothers are incompetent to the task ; both these would gladly take counsel even of a stranger, if she came in the spirit of love and sympathy to offer them the fruits of her experience, and showed them, by her knowledge of their wants, that she had some claim to their confidence.

It is as this friendly stranger, that I propose giving a few hints on the various topics connected with the character of a young woman just entering upon life. I beg my young readers to consider the following chapters as the familiar talk of a friend, who has passed through the scenes she describes, and is still young enough to remember how she felt at their age ; of one, who views the true self-discipline she recommends as added means of enjoyment, and, so far from wishing to abridge the pleasures and privileges of the young, is only desirous of showing them how they may use without abusing them, and so prolong the happiness of their early days.

As I do not wish to address any one class in particular, I shall notice the errors to which all are liable ; and if the town-bred lady finds some advice which does not apply to her situation, she must pass it by and turn to something that does ; whilst the belle of a country village must appropriate those hints that suit her condition in life, and not wonder if some tempta-

tions are mentioned from which she is happily exempt, and some rules given which are inapplicable to her mode of life.

And now let me premise, that I write for those in whom the moral sense has been developed with the intellectual faculties, for those who feel and acknowledge the duties which grow out of their relation to God and their immortal destiny; for if I did not take this for granted, I should make the present work a series of homilies, or a book of extracts from all that has been so ably written to urge young people to "seek first the kingdom of God." Fully persuaded as I am, that there is no other foundation for happiness in every stage of existence than that which Jesus Christ has laid, no means of turning this life to its best account, but by making a conscience of all our ways, and no improvement worth pursuing, but that which educates the soul for eternity, all my hints and instructions must be based upon Christian principles; though it is impossible to combine, in this small volume, the advice which belongs to the teaching of religion with that which concerns the minor morals of life. Enough has been said and written, and is continually offered to the consideration of the young, to convince them of those great truths which lie at the foundation of their happiness in time and eternity: it is the purpose of this little work to enter into details, which cannot be found in the longer and graver treatises on religion and morals; to point out the means of acquiring those lesser graces of character and manners, which adorn and set forth to the best advantage the more solid qualities, and which, though of little value unless they spring from that love to God and man which is the root of Christian virtue, are not always found growing by its side.

Many who are really conscientious, and desire to carry their religion into every thing they do or say, are

ignorant of the thousand ways in which they may either please or offend, and thus unconsciously annoy their best friends, and leave undone what would gratify them.

How it would startle many an amiable and well-educated girl to be thus addressed by an experienced friend: "You are in the daily habit of doing things, which shock my taste, infringe upon my rights, cause me continual personal inconvenience, remind me unnecessarily of the infirmities of your body, make you appear selfish where you least intend to be so, coarse where you would fain be refined, noisy where you might be gentle, an incumbrance where you might be an acquisition." Yet this might be said with truth to half the misses in their teens, who little know how much they are indebted to the patience and good-humour of their elders for tolerating them in their awkwardness and ignorance; but, if their faults were once pointed out to them, they would see them in their true light, and avoid them for ever afterwards.

Those who are most annoyed by the faulty manners of the young, cannot always point out to them the little details in which they are defective; they condemn their conduct in general terms, without attempting to analyze it, or to help them to correct it. To supply this deficiency in the friends of the young, and to stand in the place of friends to those who have none, is the purpose for which the following pages are written. By entering into the most minute details of every-day life, I would hold up to view those little particulars of conduct which, though trifling in themselves, go to make up an agreeable or disagreeable whole; I would show the numerous ways in which thoughtlessness of the rights of others leads to their violation.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF TIME.

DISTRIBUTION OF TIME.—CARE OF ODD MINUTES.—A VALUABLE RULE.—EARLY RISING.—A CONTRAST.—PICTURE OF EARLY RISING.—EFFECT OF HEAT AND COLD ON INDUSTRY.—EXCESSIVE NICETY.—VALUE OF A DAY.—THINKING AND SEWING.—ENERGY OF PURPOSE.—ATTENTION.—LORD CHESTERFIELD.

How are very young persons to be convinced of the value of time, when to them a year seems almost endless, and a pleasure that is deferred for a month seems too far off for happy anticipation? A year appears very long to the young, because it bears so large a proportion to the whole period they have lived; as we advance, this proportion becomes less and less, till, in old age, a year seems no longer than a month did in childhood. Abundant as time seems to the young, we constantly hear them excuse themselves for some duty omitted, by saying they had not time to do it, which should convince them they have no more of this precious gift than they require, and that there is some defect in their management of it, or they would not sometimes be wishing to accelerate the flight of a *day*, and at other times omit a duty for want of an *hour* in which to perform it.

There are a few plain questions, which, if honestly answered, might serve to convince any young lady, that, however long a year may seem to her in prospect, the proper use of each day would make it appear short. Let her ask herself, if her own clothes are in complete order, if there are no buttons or strings off, no gloves or stockings that need to be mended, none of those numberless stitches to be set, which every young

woman should do for herself, and the necessity for which is of perpetual recurrence. Let her consider, whether there are not many books that she has been advised to read, but which she has not yet found time to begin; whether she has not letters to answer, accounts to settle, papers to arrange, commissions to execute for absent friends, visits to make, kind offices to perform, which have all been deferred for *want of time*; and then let her judge, whether the days and weeks are too long for the duties which ought to be performed in them, and whether her use of the days that are gone has been the best possible.

Much of a woman's time is necessarily consumed by the every-day business of life. The proper care of her own person and clothing demands much more time than that of the other sex. Some household duties fall to the share of almost all young women, and claim a portion of each day; and, without a wise distribution of her time, and a strict adherence to her plan of life, she is in danger of having her intellectual and spiritual improvement continually sacrificed to the lesser interests of clothing and feeding the body. To prevent this, it is desirable that you should take into serious consideration the plan of life which best suits your age and circumstances, decide upon what ought to constitute your daily round of occupations, and allot to each its fitting time. By having regular hours for the different employments of the day, you will avoid the great waste of time which is occasioned by uncertainty as to what you shall do next. Having made a general distribution of your time and occupations for the day, provide for unavoidable interruptions and delays, by having a book of easy reading to fill up odd minutes, and a piece of needle-work always at hand to employ your fingers upon, when listening to others, or when your mind is so preoccupied that you cannot give it to a book.

The old adage, "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves," may be thus parodied, Take care of the minutes, and the days will take care of themselves. If the *minutes* were counted, that are daily wasted in idle reverie, or still idler talk, in thinking of setting about a task that is not relished, and in looking for things that should never have been mislaid, they would soon amount to *hours*, and prove sufficient for the acquisition of some elegant art, or the study of some useful science. Almost every young person has something in view which she would like to do, if she had time for it; and by scrutinizing her appropriation of every hour in the day, she will generally find as much time wasted as would suffice for the desired end, if resolutely redeemed from idleness.

A professional gentleman, of rare attainments, and one who added to the laborious duties of his calling a great variety of learning, much scientific research, and many elegant accomplishments, was asked by a young lady how he found time for all that he did. He replied, "There is one rule which I have found of great use, and therefore recommend it to you; and that is, always to do small things, such as writing a letter, copying out some short piece, making a sketch, reading a review, &c., in small portions of time, and to reserve a whole day of leisure for some long and important affair. Never use up a rainy morning in doing a variety of little jobs, and think, because you despatch a great many, that you have well bestowed your time; leave small affairs for odd half-hours, and use your uninterrupted morning for something that cannot be done in half-hours. You have sometimes wondered at my having time to correspond with so many absent friends; but all my letters of friendship are written in odd minutes, whilst I am waiting for people who are not so punctual to their appointments as I am."

You would think it poor economy to cut into a whole

yard of cloth, when you wanted a little piece to mend with; you would take a scrap from among your remnants: just such poor economy of time is it, to use up a whole day in little unconnected affairs; let your remnants of time suffice for these.

I knew a family in which all the collars and wristbands of shirts were stitched in odd minutes, that would otherwise have been wasted. The lady of the house was always provided with one in her bag, and used to stitch upon it when waiting for any body, and in scraps of time that must occur between regularly allotted portions of it. I myself read through all the papers of the *Spectator* and *Rambler*, whilst waiting breakfast for an unpunctual member of the family; and netted many yards of lace, whilst he was discussing his toast and coffee. A friend of mine, going to consult her dentist, found in his parlour an elderly lady, waiting to be operated upon, and turning the odd minutes to account by stitching away upon a wristband she had brought with her for the purpose. This was not only good economy of time, but an excellent sedative for the nerves, and must have rendered less tedious and irksome the time she was obliged to wait.

To sleep a greater number of hours than is necessary for rest and refreshment, is a voluntary and wanton abridgment of life. She who sleeps only one hour a day more than health requires, will, in a life of three score years and ten, shorten her conscious existence *nearly four years*, allowing sixteen hours to the day. Too much sleep weakens the body, and stupifies the mind; but when we take only what nature demands, the body is invigorated, and the mind has its powers renovated.

Early rising is not only expedient, but it is a duty, on which many others depend. She who sleeps late and rises in haste, cannot find time for those thoughts and meditations which are calculated to prepare her

soul for the business of the day, neither will due care and attention be bestowed upon her morning toilet; her ablutions will not be such as are required by a due regard to health and cleanliness; her hair will not be thoroughly combed and brushed, and put up nicely for the day; every thing will be done carelessly and in haste, and from another portion of the morning must be taken the time necessary for further adjustment of her dress.

When breakfast is late, the whole business of a house is retarded, and the heads of a family must not be surprised if their example of late hours is followed by all in their employ. When parents rise early, and are ready for an early breakfast, they should insist on the younger members of the family conforming to their hours; for a habit of punctuality to an early breakfast is one of the best gifts they can bestow on their children. Where this is not enforced by parental authority, the good sense and good feelings of the young people ought to ensure their punctual attendance at this meal. Those who do the work of the house feel it to be a grievance, when their business is retarded by the breakfast remaining on the table for one individual after the rest have done.

Let us now sum up the evils of late rising to a young lady. Her body is enfeebled, and her eyes are heavy; her mind is stupified, her devotions are neglected, or hastily performed; her toilet is slovenly and incomplete; her morning meal is taken alone, or with those who are annoyed at having waited for her, and the attendants are out of humour; to all this may be added, a painful sense of ill desert hanging like a millstone round her neck all day. The reverse of this picture may be easily drawn. The early riser is refreshed and invigorated by the right quantity of sleep; her eye is bright, and her mind unclouded. She has time and inclination to meditate upon God, and hold

communion with him ; she prepares her mind and heart for the duties of the day. Her body is duly cared for ; all the niceties of a careful toilet are attended to ; she meets her family at the breakfast-table, and relieves her mother from the trouble of presiding at it ; every thing is done in season, the domestics smile upon her, and she feels the impulse which is given by a consciousness of having begun the day well.

The advantages of early rising are thus set forth in that beautiful little book, called "The Whole Duty of Woman."

" Industry is up with the sun, she awaketh at the crowing of the cock, and walketh abroad to taste the sweetness of the morning.

" She is ruddy as the daughter of health ; her ears are delighted with the music of the shrill lark.

" Her garment sweepeth the dew-drop from the new stubble and the green grass, and her path is by the murmuring of the purling brook.

" Her appetite is keen ; her blood is pure and temperate, and her pulse beateth even.

" Her house is elegant, her handmaids are the daughters of neatness, and plenty smileth at her table.

" She saunters not, neither stretcheth herself out on the couch of indolence.

" She crieth not, What have I to do ? but the work of her hands is the thought of a moment.

" She listeneth not to the gossip's tale, she sippeth not her tea in scandal ; but employment is the matter of her discourse.

" Her work is done at evening, but the work of the slothful is put off till to-morrow."

I cannot pretend to name a proper hour either for retiring or rising ; these must differ in different states of society : what would be called early in one place, would be deemed late in another. Early rising naturally disposes a person to retire early ; and having

ascertained the exact quantity of sleep which agrees best with the health of body and mind, the hours of rest should be arranged accordingly ; always taking care to secure as much daylight as possible for our waking hours, and giving to sleep the hours of darkness.

The extremes of heat and cold are unfavourable to constant industry, but much may be done by intellectual beings to obviate the tendencies of climate. A great deal of time is wasted in winter, in hovering over the fire and talking of the cold, in delaying to set about a piece of work, because it requires one to leave a warm room. But a little resolution will remedy all this. You can make yourselves as comfortable by taking your work or book, and sitting at a moderate distance from the fire, as by hanging idly over it ; and if you run off briskly after what you need, the exercise will warm you better than the parlour-fire.

In summer, again, no less time is consumed in lamenting that it is so warm, and in lounging idly about, undressing several times a day in order to cool, lying down in the afternoon, and sleeping an hour or more, all which practices must be condemned as worse than useless, as a wanton killing of time. The less you think and think about the heat, the less you will feel it ; the more industriously you occupy yourselves, the less you will be incommoded by the weather ; if you never undress yourselves unseasonably, you will never feel any need of doing so ; and for a young lady, in good health, to lie down on a bed to sleep, in the daytime, is a sad waste of existence, unless some peculiar exertion renders unusual rest necessary.

Much time may be saved by learning to do every thing in the best manner, by taking hold of things in the right way ; but much may also be wasted in finical nicety. Whilst it is important to do every thing well, it is equally so not to bestow more pains and time on

any thing than it is worth. In needle-work, for instance, there is often a useless sacrifice of time, labour, and eye-sight, and twice as many stitches are put into a garment as are requisite for durability or appearance. Some housekeepers are so nice, that the whole comfort of the family is sacrificed to a perpetual warfare against dust. Cleanliness and order are indispensable in a house ; but I would not have a lady so bent on removing dust, as to jump up in the middle of an interesting conversation, to wipe away a few particles that have settled on a piece of furniture in the room, or disturb a set of readers, intent upon their books, to sweep up a few crumbs under their feet. Time is of more value than to be spent in this excessive nicety ; and whatever can be saved from occupations of daily recurrence, is a great gain in the course of the year.

Time is saved, too, by learning to *keep* things in order, by not letting crumbs fall on the floor, and by not making any litter about the room. A few moments spent in returning things to their proper places, will save you hours of setting to rights. A habit of moving quickly is another way of gaining time ; and though there is a great original difference in persons, self-education can do a great deal to accelerate the movements of the slow.

Let a person who has thought very little about the value of time, try for once how much can be accomplished in one day, by going industriously from one occupation to another, by turning all the odd minutes to account ; she will be surprised at her own powers, and at the importance of even one day in her existence ; then let her reflect on the much that might be done in a year, if every day were used in the same way. We ought to regard every day as a valuable gift, and “ begin it with a steady purpose, to make as much of it as if it were to be our whole existence.”

There is time enough, in a well-ordered day, for

every thing that a young lady ought to do. Time enough for her morning and evening consultation with her conscience, and seeking for communion with God ; time enough for a careful and exact toilet, for household duties, for study ; time enough for exercise in the open air, for visits of ceremony, and visits to the poor ; for family intercourse, for serious and light reading, for needle-work and accomplishments ; nothing need be left undone for want of time, if you only know how to economize that most precious possession, and are resolute to perform all that you can.

If you are for ever in a hurry, and tormented with the sense of deficiency, and have things laid up in your memory, as what ought to be done, but for which you cannot find time, you may be sure there is some defect in your plan of life ; you have either taken upon yourself engagements and occupations that you had better dispense with, or there is some waste of your precious hours, that ought to be put an end to ; and the sooner you enter upon a thorough investigation and reform, the better.

Many hours in a woman's life are devoted to employments that do not occupy the mind, such as plain sewing, embroidery, knitting, netting, &c., and this time is generally spent in vague revery ; some persons dignify it with the name of thought, or meditation ; but, when trains of ideas are allowed to pass through the mind whilst the understanding remains passive, it is nothing better than revery, and this is, at once, the greatest waste of time and injury to the intellect. Now, a little self-discipline would turn these hours to account, by accustoming you to think and work at the same time, and a little management would provide for the joint occupation of ears and fingers. When engaged with your needle, a younger brother's lesson may be heard, reading aloud can be listened to with advantage, or a sister's practising can be attended to. If you are

so situated that none of these resources are at hand, you can exercise your memory by repeating something you have learned, or you can commit a new piece, by placing the book open before you. Dr. Beattie mentions a highly gifted lady of his acquaintance, who always read while she was sewing or knitting, and had so learned to divide her sight between her book and her needle, as to go through many volumes in that way. If you are unable to acquire this art, you can certainly learn to think whilst you are mechanically employed, and so redeem your mind from that slothful state which will enervate every faculty. You can begin by taxing yourself to remember all the particulars of something you have read or heard, or you can make comparisons, and find differences and likenesses between things, or characters, or writings. You are doubtless acquainted with the works of Miss Edgeworth, and have read many of Sir Walter Scott's. If you have read *Waverley*, think over the leading features of the story, consider the hero's character, and whether you have ever read of any other like it. Perhaps *Vivian* may occur to you as another wavering person, led on by circumstances against his better judgment; then compare the two heroes, find out all the particulars in which they resemble, and in which they differ, from each other. This will be a useful exercise of the memory and judgment. When a subject is once started in your mind, and you find you have some thoughts upon it, do not suffer your attention to wander away to some other topic, but keep on thinking about that one thing, till you have thought it out. This will strengthen your mind as bodily exercise does the muscles, and is a real improvement of time.

In Hannah More's beautiful story of *The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*, you will find an example of the very economy of time I am recommending. There, a poor untutored man turns to account the silent watches

of the night, when he is obliged to be abroad, tending his flocks, by meditating upon portions of Scripture which he has previously committed to memory, and by methodizing his thoughts and recollections.

Just as the finest library is useless to the student, unless arranged according to some order, and with a catalogue to indicate its treasures; just as a ship-load of natural curiosities would be of little worth until classed and arranged scientifically; just as your own work-box would be of little use, if every ball of cotton and skein of silk were unwound and tangled up together, if all your needles and pins were mixed, and every article in confusion; so are the treasures of the mind of little avail, if all sorts of facts and impressions are indiscriminately remembered and laid up together, without classification or arrangement. What is taken into the mind by means of reading, observation, and conversation, does not minister to its growth, unless assimilated to it by reflection, comparison, and all the processes of the mind necessary to mature our thoughts; and these can be carried on to great advantage, whilst the fingers are mechanically employed.

The habit of setting yourself to work quietly, promptly, and resolutely, helps on the business of the day wonderfully. I have seen one sister half through a task that was not agreeable to either, whilst the other was lamenting the necessity of doing it, and considering how to get through it with the least trouble. Those who talk much of what they do, or are going to do, are not those who accomplish the most.

Where there is a spirit of order and method in the heads of a family, or the business of it is properly distributed among the members, each one knowing his or her appointed task, and setting regularly and quietly about it, so much is despatched in a short time, that the day seems to contain more hours than it is found

to have in an ill-ordered family, where all is hurry and bustle, and yet nothing is done in its season.

As another means of improving time, I would advise you, whatever you do, to do it heartily, and to give your whole attention to it. If from any circumstances you find your mind incapable of fixed application to a book which you are reading, or a translation you are making, or some new music you are learning, do not sit over your task in vain, with eyes, which, though fixed on the page, do not convey one idea to the mind; but immediately change your occupation for something you can attend to; and when you have succeeded in fixing your attention on any task, however light, you have managed your mind and economized your time, better than in reading the profoundest work with wandering thoughts.

So much has been said and written during the last forty years on the subject of attention, and it has been so ably shown by Miss Edgeworth and Mrs. Hamilton, and other writers on education, to lie at the foundation of all intellectual culture, to constitute the great difference between wise and foolish people, that it is to be hoped the young ladies of the present day come forward in life with that faculty developed and strengthened by judicious treatment in childhood and youth. It would be well for every one to test herself upon this point, by seeing whether she can, at will, concentrate her whole powers of mind upon a given subject; whether she can take up a grave work and read it for half an hour without one wandering thought; whether she can make a translation of twenty lines without thinking of any thing but what she is about. If she cannot do this, it is most likely that full half her reading is to no purpose, the mind is wandering whilst the eye is fixed, and if she were to stop suddenly, and ask herself what the last page was about, she would be unable to give any account

of the matter. Such an employment of time is the greatest waste of it, as well as a real injury to the mind. When this habit of inattention prevails, it prevents us from reaping the full benefit of any thing we do, or see, or hear; whereas an attentive observer is always learning, his lightest occupations are still means of knowledge. Two hours spent at an evening party will leave nothing but vague impressions, and be a mere waste of time to one person, whilst to another they will have furnished abundant topics of reflection, and be full of instruction.

In one of *Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son* is the following passage on the employment of time, which is so much in point, that I cannot forbear to quote it; and I do this the more readily, because there is so much that is hollow in his morality and anti-christian in his politeness, that I cannot recommend the perusal of the whole book.

“Nor do I call pleasures idleness, or time lost, provided they are the pleasures of a rational being; on the contrary, a certain portion of your time employed in those pleasures, is very usefully employed. Such are, some public spectacles, and good company; but then these require attention, or else your time is quite lost.

“There are a great many people who think themselves employed all day, and who, if they were to cast up their accounts at night, would find that they had done just nothing. They have read two or three hours mechanically, without either attending to what they read, and, consequently, without retaining it, or reasoning upon it. Thence they saunter into company, without taking any part in it, and without observing the characters of the persons, or the subjects of the conversation; but are either thinking of some trifle, foreign to the present purpose, or often not thinking at all; which silly and idle suspension of thought they would dignify with the name of absence and distraction.

“ Pray do you be as attentive to your pleasures as to your studies. In the latter, observe and reflect upon all you read ; and in the former, be watchful and attentive to all that you see and hear ; and never have it to say, as a thousand fools do, of things that were said and done before their faces, ‘ That truly they did not mind them, because they were thinking of something else.’ Why were they thinking of something else ? and if they were, why did they come there ? The truth is, that the fools were thinking of nothing. Remember to do well what you are about, be that what it will ; it is either worth doing well, or not at all. Wherever you are, have your ears and your eyes about you. Listen to every thing that is said, and see every thing that is done.”

CHAPTER III.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

WOMAN'S PECULIAR CALLING.—HOW TO SAVE LABOUR.—
 DOMESTIC AFFAIRS HONOURABLE.—EXAMPLE.—FRENCH
 HOUSEKEEPING.—USELESS DISCUSSION.—HOUSE-WORK
 GOOD FOR THE HEALTH.—POURING OUT TEA AND
 COFFEE.—PREPARATION FOR COOKERY.—PREPARATION
 FOR DINNER COMPANY.—EXPENSE.—ALLOWANCE.—
 ANECDOTE.—UNCERTAINTY OF RICHES.—ANECDOTE.—
 BEST THINGS.—GENERAL RULES.

For a young woman in any situation in life to be ignorant of the various business that belongs to house-keeping, is as great a deficiency as it would be in a merchant not to understand accounts, or the master of a vessel not to be acquainted with navigation. If a woman does not know how the various work of a house should be done, she might as well know nothing, for that is her express vocation ; and it matters not how much learning, or how many accomplishments, she may have, if she is wanting in that which is to fit her for her peculiar calling.

Whether rich or poor, young or old, married or single, a woman is always liable to be called to the performance of every kind of domestic duty, as well as to be placed at the head of a family ; and nothing short of a practical knowledge of the details of housekeeping can ever make those duties easy, or render her competent to direct others in the performance of them.

All moral writers on female character treat of domestic economy as an indispensable part of female education. Madame Roland, one of the most remarkable women of the last century, says of herself, “ The same child who read systematic works, who could explain the circles of the celestial sphere, who could handle the

crayon and the graver, and who at eight years of age was the best dancer in the youthful parties, was frequently called into the kitchen to make an omelet, pick herbs, and skim the pot."

All female characters that are held up to admiration, whether in fiction or in biography, will be found to have possessed domestic accomplishments.

Since, then, the details of good housekeeping must be included in a good female education, it is very desirable that they should be acquired when young, and so practised as to become easy, and to be performed dexterously and expeditiously; for, important as they are, they must not be allowed to consume too much time, and the ready wit and ingenuity of a woman cannot be turned to better account, than in devising methods of expediting household affairs, and producing the best effect with the least expense of time and labour.

It is for your own ease, and that of your domestics, to abridge the work of the house as much as possible, and, by endeavouring to find out the relative importance of the different branches of household economy, to give to each its due weight, and no more. By good management, by method, and by a habit of moving quickly, all may be done in order and in season, and much of the day left for other things. Let those who find themselves so overloaded with these cares and duties that they do not find time for cultivating their minds and attending to the claims of benevolence, carefully examine their way of life, and see if they cannot retrench some hours from their every-day occupations. Perhaps they may be doing as a young lady of my acquaintance did, who used to spend two hours every morning in arranging the glasses of flowers that adorned her mother's parlour; and when asked if she had read such and such books, replied in the negative, and gave as a reason, that she never could find time to read.

Better would it have been for her never to have had a flower in the house, than thus to neglect the more important duties of mental culture. It is well to bear in mind, that there is always time enough for every thing that we ought to do, and if any duty is neglected from a supposed want of time, the fault is in our arrangement; we have given too much to some occupation or amusement, and should immediately make a wiser distribution of our hours.

Now, if it is granted by my young friends, that they ought to take a part in domestic affairs, then let them do it with a good grace, and not be ashamed of it. Some persons are very notable, but take the greatest pains to conceal it, as if it were a disgrace rather than a merit; their moral sense is clouded by some false notions of gentility, or their false pride makes them fancy certain occupations to be degrading, as if it were possible that persons should be degraded by doing that which they ought to do.

The young lady who spends two hours a-day over her flowers ought to be ashamed of that; but if the arrangements of your father's household make it desirable and proper that you should assist at the ironing-table, or in making cake and pies, or in clear-starching your own muslins, or in making preserves, or cleaning silver, or doing any such piece of notable work, you should no more think of concealing it, or being ashamed of it, than you would be of combing your hair, or hemming a pocket handkerchief. This false shame about housewifery adds much to its unpleasantness; whereas a true view of the beauty and fitness of these feminine offices would invest them with a charm, and recommend them to the most refined.

The elegant and accomplished Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who figured in the fashionable as well as in the literary circles of her time, has said that "the most minute details of household economy become ele-

gant and refined, when they are ennobled by sentiment ;” and they are truly ennobled when we do them either from a sense of duty, or consideration for a parent, or love to a husband. “To furnish a room,” continues this lady, “is no longer a common-place affair, shared with upholsterers and cabinet-makers ; it is decorating the place where I am to meet a friend or lover. To order dinner is not merely arranging a meal with my cook, it is preparing refreshment for him whom I love. These necessary occupations, viewed in this light by a person capable of strong attachment, are so many pleasures, and afford her far more delight than the games and shows which constitute the amusements of the world.”

Such is the testimony of a titled lady of the last century to the sentiment that may be made to mingle in the most homely occupations. I will now quote that of a modern female writer and traveller, who, in her pleasant book, called *Six Weeks on the Loire*, has thus described the housewifery of the daughter of a French nobleman, residing in a superb chateau on that river.

The travellers had just arrived and been introduced, when the following scene took place.

“The bill of fare for dinner was discussed in my presence, and settled, *sans façon*, with that delightful frankness and gaiety which in the French character gives a charm to the most trifling occurrence. Mademoiselle Louise then begged me to excuse her for half an hour, as she was going to make some creams and some pastilles. I requested I might accompany her, and also render myself useful ; we accordingly went together to the dairy. I made tarts à l’Anglaise, whilst she made confections and *bonbons*, and all manner of pretty things, with as much ease as if she had never done any thing else, and as much grace as she displayed in the saloon. I could not help thinking, as I looked

at her, with her servants about her, all cheerful, respectful, and anxious to attend upon her, how much better it would be for the young ladies in England, if they would occasionally return to the habits of their grandmammās, and mingle the animated and endearing occupations of domestic life, and the modest manners and social amusements of home, with the perpetual practising on harps and pianos, and the incessant efforts at display and search after gaiety, which, at the present day, render them anything but what an amiable man of a reflecting mind and delicate sentiments would desire in the woman he might wish to select as his companion for life.

“ But it was not only in the more trifling affairs of the *ménage* that this young lady acquitted herself so agreeably ; in the household, the garden, the farm, among the labourers, their wives and children, with the poor in the neighbourhood, and the casual wanderer, everywhere she was superintending, directing, kind, amiable, the comfort of all around, and the delight of her family ; her cheerfulness was in proportion to

‘ —that sweet peace which goodness bosoms ever.’

She flew up and down the rocks with the lightness of a mountain roe ; she sprang into a boat like the Lady of the Lake, and could manage an oar with as much grace and skill. With all this, her mind was thoroughly cultivated. She had an elegant taste in the authors of her own language, understood Latin, Italian, and English, and charmed me with her conversation, whilst she employed her fingers in the fancy-work with which the French ladies occupy the moments which some call idle, but which with them are always sociably, and generally carefully employed.”

May those who erroneously suppose that the first step in gentility is a contempt for household affairs, lay

to heart the lesson contained in this description of high life!

Having now shown, that to understand and superintend all that belongs to domestic economy is the proper vocation of a woman, let her situation in life be what it may, and that, so far from being ashamed of it, she should dignify it by her manner of exercising it, a caution may be necessary against making its details too prominent in the social circle, and talking too much about them. Honourable as is the performance of those daily duties, it is bad taste to say much about them. A well-ordered house has been fitly compared to a watch, all the wheels and springs of which are out of sight, and it is only known that they exist, and are in order, by the regularity with which their results are brought about.

The time necessarily consumed by these daily cares is very considerable; let us beware how we add to it by wasting a moment on needless recapitulation, and useless discussions of domestic affairs. When you have done your household tasks to the best of your abilities, dismiss the subject from your mind, and do not let the thought of it intrude upon other things that have their appropriate place in the day's occupation.

The disinterested affection of mothers often leads them to dispense with all assistance from their daughters, in their domestic affairs, so long as they are in daily attendance upon school. Where the school-hours are diligently employed, and the tasks laborious, and much time is required to prepare lessons at home, it is particularly important that all the leisure a girl has should be wisely disposed of; but far better would it be for her health, that some of it should be given to the stirring occupations of the household, than that she should be sitting over a frame of worsted or lace-work, hurting her eyes and wasting her time in making bead

bags, or some little ornamental article of dress, not worth a tithe of the pains bestowed upon it.

Next in healthfulness to exercise in the open air, is that which is taken in the various occupations of a notable housekeeper. Making a bed is such very good exercise of the whole body, that it is often prescribed by physicians to young ladies in high life, who are suffering from want of sufficient bodily exertion; and many a titled lady has been condemned to share the labours of the housemaid, in order to bring back the colour to her faded cheek, and improve the play of her lungs.

An elderly lady, as much distinguished for her skill in domestic affairs as for her literary taste and intellectual attainments, smiles when her young friends speak of walking in the streets for health, and tells them they would find it much more effectual exercise to sweep a chamber or rub furniture, and this being done with the windows open would give them the fresh air also. It is therefore mistaken kindness in mothers, to excuse their daughters from all participation in the work of the house; since it deprives them of exercise that would benefit their health, and of a habit of usefulness, highly valuable to girls of all classes.

If this has been the experience of any of my readers, I would advise them, whilst they love and honour the disinterested affection that has spared them all domestic labour, to change their habits on leaving school, and to make a point of taking care of their own chambers, at least, if the arrangements of the family do not render further exertions, in that way, desirable. It is a good plan, to strip the clothes off your bed, and shake it up, as soon as you rise from it; by doing it then, your cap protects your hair from any lint or feathers, and being lightly clothed, your movements are perfectly free, and the glow occasioned by the exertion makes you, on a cold morning, feel less dread of cold water. You can

finish making your bed, and dust your furniture, after you are dressed, and before breakfast, if there is time ; but if not, return and do it as soon as possible after that meal is over.

At breakfast, too, a grown-up daughter should relieve her mother from the trouble of pouring out tea and coffee, and, by giving her mind to the business, and learning all her mother's ways, make it agreeable to her to resign the office. I have seen some young ladies very earnest to be-of use, and to take some of their mothers' duties on themselves ; but, by not entering into the true spirit of the business, and learning to do the thing in the best way, their services have not been acceptable ; and, far from being conscious that the fault was in themselves, they have blamed their mothers for not being allowed to relieve them of some of their burdens.

There is more to be learned about pouring out tea and coffee, than most young ladies are willing to believe. If those decoctions are made at the table, which is by far the best way, they require experience, judgment, and exactness ; if they are brought on the table ready made, it still requires judgment so to apportion them, that they shall prove sufficient in quantity for the family party, and that the elder members shall have the stronger cups. I have often seen persons pour out tea, who, not being at all aware that the first cup is the weakest, and that the tea grows stronger as you proceed, have bestowed the poorest cup upon the greatest stranger, and given the strongest to a very young member of the family, who would have been better without any. Where several cups of equal strength are wanted, you should pour a little into each, and then go back, inverting the order as you fill them up, and then the strength will be apportioned properly. An experienced pourer of tea waits till all the cups of the company are returned to her before she fills any a

second time, that all may share alike. You should learn every one's taste, in the matter of sugar, and cream too, in order to suit them in that respect. Delicacy and neatness may be shown in the manner of handling and rinsing the cups, of helping persons to sugar, and using the cream-pot without letting the cream run down from the lip. There are a thousand little niceties which will occur to you, if you give due attention to the business, and resolve to do it with the thrift of a good housekeeper, and the ease and dignity of a refined lady. When you have once acquired good habits in this department, it will require less attention, and you will always do it in the best way, without thinking much about it. I knew one very happy match, that grew out of the admiration felt by a gentleman on seeing a young lady preside well at the tea-table. Her graceful and dexterous movements there first fixed his attention upon her, and led to a further acquaintance.

If you wish to assist in the business of a family, and yet to have fixed hours for other things, you must choose those departments which are independent of others, such as doing up your own muslins and laces, taking care of your own chamber, presiding at the breakfast and tea table, washing up the china there used, arranging the fruit for dessert, trimming the parlour-lamps, and many other things that may be quickly disposed of, and so leave you at leisure for your other employments. Where, however, it is necessary to co-operate with others, do it cheerfully, and make your private arrangements accordingly. If you are required to make cake or pies, and can do it before breakfast, there is a great saving of time in it; as by rising earlier you may accomplish it without sacrificing any of your usual occupations. You can dress yourself at once for the business, and save time in that way also. And here let me observe, that every sort of

cookery should be done in a dress that will wash, with a clean apron over it, and the hair covered up. To those who are well trained by notable mothers, this hint will seem superfluous; but having lately seen a lady making pies in an old black silk dress, trimmed with crape, and every crease full of flour, I am encouraged to give the caution. All old silk is useful, either to ourselves or others, for linings; but once worn to make pies or cake in, it will be so defaced as to lose half its value. Being properly equipped for your work, with clean hands and nails, and having used your pocket handkerchief and put it away, wash your hands again, the last thing you do before putting them into the flour, and have a basin and towel by your side, to repeat the operation whenever needed. Wipe every utensil before you use it, keep all things covered up from flies and dust, be exact in weighing and measuring, and then your success will not be matter of chance.

When you are assisting those older than yourself, it is your place to follow their directions, and do things in their way, although you may not wholly approve of it; and you can be laying up lessons for yourself against the time when you can properly take the lead in these affairs.

Where dinner-parties are given under circumstances requiring much additional labour on the part of the mother and daughters, it is well to choose the dishes with a view to several of them being such as can be prepared beforehand. Whatever care you delegate to another, give up entirely; for it is only in this way that you can make your deputies feel their responsibility.

Bright silver and steel, clear glass, neatly-arranged salt-cellars and castors, are within the reach of everybody; and it is much more for the comfort of your guests, and the credit of your housekeeping, that your tumblers and decanters should be clean, than that they

should be elaborately cut ; that your knife-handles should be perfectly wiped, rather than of a costly material. So also of other things, for the enjoyment of a company at dinner depends much more on neatness and good order, than on expensive table-furniture ; on a few dishes well cooked, than a great variety ill served.

When friends come to see you uninvited, do the best you can to entertain them well, but make no comment or apology ; for that always sounds to your guests like a reproach for taking you unawares.

If you are blest with affectionate and indulgent parents, beware how you influence them to incur expenses they can ill afford, either in dress, furniture, or entertainments. Their feelings are all on your side ; and, instead of appealing to them, you should consult their judgment and experience, and beg them not to grant your request unless they think it right, and know that they can afford it. Even in those cases where young people think they are unnecessarily restricted, they are apt to be mistaken ; the ambition of parents for their children is generally as great as that of the children for themselves ; and without a full knowledge of their father's affairs, they cannot judge of what he can afford to spend on their pleasures. Where it is necessary to study economy in every way, and fathers complain of the frequent demands made upon their purses by their daughters, it is best for both parties that an allowance should be agreed on, and regularly paid every quarter. A girl is thus taught the value of money, and she learns to be careful how she spends it ; she is led to exercise her judgment and taste, and to restrict herself in one respect, in order to indulge herself in another. Without an allowance, young persons cannot know the pleasure of denying themselves what might seem very reasonable and proper, for the sake of bestowing the sum thus saved in charity. There is no generosity in making presents to our friends, no benevolence in

giving to the poor, if we are merely the distributors of another person's bounty, and have not one gratification the less ourselves. A feeling of responsibility grows out of the disbursement of a certain sum which we regard as our own.

I have seen the favourable operation of this sentiment among children of my acquaintance. I once told a story of distress before several boys and girls of different ages. It did not enter the heads of any of the children of rich parents present, that they had any thing to do in the case ; but one little boy, in less affluent circumstances, and accustomed to have an allowance of pocket-money, drew me aside and whispered, " How much do you think I ought to give that poor lame man you told us of ? I have five shillings and sixpence in my money-box."

But to return from this digression :—it is dangerous for daughters to urge their parents to give entertainments, and to make an appearance beyond what they can really afford ; the consequence of such imprudence may be often seen. How many, who have flourished away for a time, and surprised their more cautious neighbours, have failed, or else have died, and left so little property, that their daughters have been obliged to earn their own living !

Though fortunes are sometimes rapidly made, they are as suddenly lost ; and the female part of a family are peculiarly interested in a prudent line of conduct during prosperity, in order that a decent competence may be secured to them. As daughters arrive at years of discretion, they should be informed of the nature and proceeds of their father's business, or of his income, if a professional man ; they should know also the family expenses, and the various claims upon their father's purse, that they may regulate their own expenditure accordingly.

Whatever economy it is right for you to practise,

you should never be ashamed of. If at any time you find yourself trying to conceal your thrift, you had better pause and examine your motives ; for either you are possessed of that absurd weakness, a desire to appear richer than you really are, or else the piece of economy in question is not necessary, and therefore it is that you are ashamed of it.

Two instances that came within my own knowledge will show the difference between a mean saving and true economy.

Miss D—— gave a large party, and invited all her acquaintances ; she wrote all her invitations herself, and would not accept of any assistance ; she shut herself up to do it, and seemed to have some mystery about it. The fact was, that she used different kinds of paper and various-sized notes, according to the supposed consequence or gentility of the persons invited. Some had gilt-edged, hot-pressed note-paper, of the largest size, and enclosed in another half sheet ; whilst others had only a quarter of a sheet of coarse, blue-looking letter-paper. The notes were compared, and the consequence was, that some were affronted, and all despised this mean contrivance for making a show and making a saving at the same time. When the lady shut herself up to write her notes, she might have known that she was doing wrong.

When Miss G—— gives a party, she uses but one kind of paper for all whom she invites ; she takes large fine letter-paper, and cuts each sheet into four notes ; and, being an economist of time as well as money, she cuts and folds her paper whilst she is talking to some visiter or listening to reading. A gay young friend who was sitting by her, whilst thus occupied, observed that she never used anything herself but gilt-edged note-paper, and asked Miss G—— why she did not send for some, and save herself the trouble of cutting up large paper. “ Because,” she replied, “ that costs double

the money, whilst this answers every purpose; and I take care to cut and fold paper when I should otherwise be doing nothing." Her friend then advised her to use half a sheet instead of a quarter. "That seems to me a mere waste of paper," resumed Miss G——; "it would oblige me to consume four quires of paper for my party, instead of two, and do nobody any good." Her friend smiled, and said something about a trumpery saving of only half-a-crown after all; but Miss G—— was not at all disturbed by her remarks; she acted on principle, and cared not who knew that she chose to save half-a-crown in paper, when she gave a party. That half-crown was afterwards spent in sending a coach for a friend, who could not walk and could not afford to hire a conveyance; this no one then knew but the person obliged. If her notes were neither large nor gilt, they were all alike, and gave no offence.

There is in some houses such a difference between the things used every day, and those which are kept for company, that a guest cannot be invited to dine or take tea without making a revolution in the whole table-furniture. The best dinner-set is often kept in the closet of a spare chamber; so piles of plates and arms-full of dishes are seen walking down stairs on company-days, and walking up again the day after; every knife and fork, every glass and spoon, is changed; and this is so great a labour and so much care to the ladies of the mansion, that I have known it made a sufficient reason for not exercising the rites of hospitality towards a stranger who had every claim to them. Where the things in common use are so much inferior to those paraded before company, the family live in continual dread of accidental visitors, and meal-time is a season of secrecy, and a ring at the door-bell produces the greatest consternation.

Now would it not be far more refined and dignified, as well as more honest and comfortable, to live better

every day, and make less parade before company? Instead of using ordinary crockery and parts of several broken sets of different patterns when alone, and having a very expensive set of French porcelain in the best-chamber closet for state occasions, would it not be better to have blue and white ware all the time? That can always be matched, and by using the same as best and common, you will never have a motley assemblage of dishes and plates to be used up. If you can afford to have expensive table-furniture laid by for company, you can afford to use whole dishes and handsome spoons every day, and, by so doing, you will escape a great many uncomfortable feelings, and be far more likely to be hospitable and friendly. A person should have too much self-respect to use anything when alone that is *unfit* for her condition, or to wish to conceal anything that *belongs* to it. If you think it right to continue to use any utensil of glass or china after it has been marred by some accident, do it openly, care not who sees it; if you are ashamed to have it seen, be ashamed to use it at all; a proper self-respect requires this.

The greatest hospitality is generally to be found among persons of small incomes, who are content to live according to their means, and never give any great dinners; for nothing can be further from true hospitality than the spirit in which such entertainments are generally given.

As a general rule for living neatly and saving time, it is better to *keep clean* than to *make clean*. If you are careful not to drop crumbs of bread, or cake, on the carpet, you will avoid an untidy room, and save the trouble of cleaning it. In working, if you make a practice of putting all the ends of your thread into a division of your work-box kept for the purpose, and never let one fall on the floor, the room will look very differently at the end of the morning from what it does

when this is not attended to. A house is kept far cleaner when all the family are taught to wipe their feet thoroughly, on coming in from out of doors, than it can be where this is neglected. There are a thousand ways of keeping clean, and saving labour and time, which it is well worth while to learn and practise.

Mrs. Hamilton, in her admirable story of *The Cottagers of Glenburnie*, gives three simple rules for the regulation of domestic affairs, which deserve to be remembered, and which would, if carried into practice, be the means of saving time, labour, and patience, and of making every house a "well-ordered" one. They are as follows:—

- "1. Do everything in its proper time.
 - "2. Keep everything to its proper use.
 - "3. Put everything in its proper place."
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CHAPTER IV.

NURSING THE SICK.

FIRST REQUISITES IN A NURSE.—EVILS OF AWKWARDNESS.—NOISE TO BE AVOIDED.—CLEANLINESS AND VENTILATION.—EASY POSITIONS.—LIFTING A PATIENT.—QUIET MOVEMENTS.—NIGHT-WATCHING.—BED-MAKING.—RUBBING.—BATHING.—BLISTERS.—LEECHES.—LITTLE COMFORTS.—BEHAVIOUR TO PHYSICIANS.—DIET.—CONCLUSION.

It is the privilege of woman to be the ministering spirit at the couch of the sick. Of all her social duties, none is of more importance, or more frequent recurrence, than this. It recommends itself equally to the young and the old, to the selfish and the generous. As there is no possession more uncertain than that of health, and since the young and vigorous are liable, as well as the aged and the infirm, to be laid upon the bed of sickness, by an epidemic, or by imprudent exposure, or by some accident, you may be called upon at any moment to attend upon your parents, your brothers, your sisters, or your companions; it is therefore very necessary to know how to render such services in an efficient and proper manner.

Those who have warm affections, and ready sympathies, will seek this duty, rather than avoid it; and, though long-continued efforts are not to be expected from persons who act from impulse, many kind attentions are thus paid; and a little knowledge as to the best manner of performing the service, so readily and generously undertaken, will add much to its value. But it is only such as act in this, as in other things, from the highest principle, who can ever be the ready, cheerful, indefatigable, persevering, and agreeable nurses that you should aim to be, and may become by

habitual self-regulation, together with a little instruction as to the details of a sick chamber, which I here propose to offer.

The essential qualities of a good nurse must grow out of that entire devotion of the heart to do what is right in the smallest as in the greatest affairs of life, which I have already shown to be the only foundation of virtue and happiness. No motives short of the highest are proof against the trials and temptations of a sick chamber: the duties of a nurse require perfectly good faith and constant self-sacrifice; truth and justice are even more essential in the intercourse of the nurse and patient, than between man and man in the more public transactions of life; and without this strict principle, this single purpose to do right in all things, no instructions, however minute, can make good nurses.

Supposing, therefore, that this indispensable foundation exists, a young woman may easily acquire that knowledge of nursing, which shall render her services to the sick of the highest value. Those who have had much personal experience of illness, often learn from it how to minister to others, how to avoid the awkward actions from which they have themselves suffered, and how to apply the remedies which have alleviated their own pains; but those who have never been very ill themselves, and have had no experience in nursing, cannot know the various ways in which the sufferings of patients may be lessened or increased by the mode of attending upon them. One who has never endured a nervous headach, cannot imagine the aggravation of it produced by a heavy step in the room, the banging or creaking of a door, admitting light through a crack in the shutters, asking unnecessary questions, jarring the bed on which the patient lies, and a thousand such inadvertencies as seem the veriest trifles to the well, but are serious evils to the sick.

Now as every young woman ought to know how to perform the gentle offices of a good nurse, and few can be supposed to have had much experience of sickness, it is well to gain the necessary information from every source that presents itself; and if, by reading a few pages in this book, you can learn to avoid some awkwardness, and to administer more acceptably to the sick, you will not think the time ill bestowed.

A light step, quick but gentle movements, and a dexterous use of the hands, are pre-requisites in a good nurse; they seem to be natural endowments, and to belong, in a great degree, to original temperament and conformation. In this, however, as in other things, much may be done by cultivation, where nature has not done the most; by observing the alert movements and nimble fingers of expert persons, you may improve your own, and avoid, at least, that degree of clumsiness which has been described by saying of a person, "He uses his hands as if all his fingers were thumbs, and his thumbs legs of mutton."

If the absence of all unnecessary noise is a luxury to those in good health, it is of the first importance to the sick; and no one can be acceptable to them who cannot step lightly, and move gently. I have seen a nervous patient seriously incommoded by the attendance of a friend who wore a rustling silk dress, and whose every movement was accompanied with so much noise, that the invalid could not bear it, and was obliged at last to beg her to change her dress, or keep out of the room. Apart from the rustling noise of the silk, it was an unfit dress for a sick room, where nothing should be worn that will not wash. But to continue the subject of noise. The occasional falling of pieces of half-burnt coal upon the fender is jarring to the feelings of nervous persons, even in health, but in extreme sickness it should be provided against, as should also the throwing on of fresh coal, which makes a

dreadful rattling. This should be avoided by putting on lumps of coal with the tongs, or even with the fingers, protected by an old glove. In sweeping the hearth, too, much unnecessary clatter is often made, by holding the tongs and shovel together in one hand, as well as in other ways, too trifling to mention; which may easily be avoided, if people are aware how trying such noises are to the patient. Most people refrain from loud talking in the chambers of the sick; but few are equally careful to abstain from needless whispering, which is often more trying than a common low tone. The buzzing noise which cannot be understood or shut out, is very fatiguing; and rather than inflict it on a patient, the nurse and her companions should keep silence.

All creaking hinges and grating locks should be immediately oiled; and if by chance you have on a pair of shoes that creak as you walk, lose no time in changing them; for nothing is more unpleasant to the ear, particularly that of the sick. Folding or unfolding a newspaper that has become very dry, will make noise enough to wake a person from a light slumber; and so will turning over the leaves of some books, if done carelessly. I have known a whole night's rest lost to a sick person by this simple act on the part of the watcher. Coughing, sneezing, and blowing the nose, may be done at such unlucky moments as to cause broken slumbers. It is therefore advisable to learn how to do the voluntary acts with the least possible noise, and how to prevent the involuntary one by pressing the corners of the eyes next the bridge of the nose. The instances I have now mentioned, are sufficient to show a young nurse how many ways there are of making unnecessary noises; and if her attention is once thoroughly alive to the importance of stillness to the sick, she will herself find out others. I shall, therefore, pass next to the subject of cleanliness and ventilation.

Important as it is to all to sleep in airy rooms, and to have frequent changes of linen, it is doubly so to the invalid. Fevers may be sometimes prolonged, and the recovery after them retarded, by deficiency in these particulars. Our sense of smell was not given us in vain, and one of its uses is to detect the impurity that would injure us. If there is anything offensive in a sick room, you may be sure that it requires very careful ventilation; to effect this, without exposing the patient to cold, is one of the arts of a nurse.

Bed-linen and body-linen should be changed oftener in sickness than in health; and every day, when the patient can sit up long enough to have it done, all the bedclothes should be carried out of the chamber and thoroughly aired, either out of doors or in another room, whilst the bed is shaken up and remains uncovered and the mattress is turned. When the sick person can only sit up a very short time, it is well to have two sets of pillows, blankets, and sheets, and employ them alternately, that one set may be airing whilst the other is in use.

Bed-curtains are bad things in severe sickness, and ought to be taken down, or put quite out of the way.

Where there is not so much debility as to make the effort of changing too exhausting to the invalid, no articles of clothing worn during the day should be retained about the person at night; they should be so disposed of as to be well aired by the time they are wanted in the morning; and, in like manner, everything worn at night should be left off during the day. Where the weakness of the patient forbids these changes morning and evening, the same clothing must be kept on night and day; but in such a case, it must be oftener changed for that which is wholly clean.

Personal cleanliness is important to the sick, and daily ablutions necessary. Let the friend or nurse who takes charge of the sick, encourage them to perform more

than their usual ablutions. When too ill to use a tooth-brush, some good may be done by cleansing the mouth with a little swab, made by winding a piece of fine linen rag round the end of a small stick. Scraping the tongue, too, with a little instrument made for the purpose, or with a silver knife, is comfortable.

All the utensils in a sick room should be kept constantly clean ; and, generally speaking, this will be best done by the person acting as nurse at the time ; for sending away, to be washed in the kitchen, every spoon and tumbler that has been used, makes too much passing in and out of the room. You should therefore take care to provide yourself with suitable towels and a little tub ; for washing up glass and crockery in a bowl makes too much noise. As soon as possible after using an article, wash and wipe it, that it may be ready for the next occasion. It is some comfort to the sick, to take even the most nauseous dose out of a clean vessel, and the nurse should feel that she is bound in honour to prepare everything in the most cleanly way, never using a cup or spoon twice without washing it. A bowl of water should be always standing ready for you to wash your hands in, and this should be done before you touch either food or medicine for the patient ; in preparing either, use your fingers sparingly, and never put your lips to it ; but if it be necessary to taste the article, take a clean spoon to do it, and put it aside after using it. Many a poor, feeble sufferer, has been disgusted with the food his stomach craved, by seeing a nurse put her lips to it whilst in preparation, or by having it presented in a smeared, sticky vessel.

Always, in carrying any liquid to be taken by a person in bed, carry a towel too, to spread over the sheet, in case a drop should be spilled ; for a drop of gruel is of no consequence on a towel, but on a sheet it would give an appearance of untidiness to the whole bed. You should frequently straighten the bed-clothes, and

beat up the pillows, and always have close at hand a small blanket or a flannel gown, or something else suitable to throw over the patient's shoulders and back, when sitting up in bed. In this position much support is needed at the back, for which purpose bed-chairs are made; but where they are not to be had, a small foot-stool, put behind the pillows and the bolster doubled, makes a very good substitute; and so does a baby's chair, the back put down next the patient's back, and the legs up, with pillows before it. It also adds greatly to the ease of this position to have something at the feet, to push against; if there be no foot-board to the bed, it should be something heavy that will keep its place, but if there be, any brace between that and the feet will answer. Sitting up thus is often a great relief to a person confined to the bed, and would be more frequently resorted to, if those in attendance knew how to take the strain off the back, by supporting it in the manner here recommended.

When a patient is too ill to sit up whilst the bed is making, he can sometimes crawl over to a cot-bed made up, warmed, and put close beside the one he is in; or he can be lifted from one bed to another. In shifting persons from one bed to another, an inconvenience often arises to the inexperienced, from attempting to lift the patient from the first bed to the second with his head in the same direction after his removal as before. The persons lifting him, in this case, being between the patient and the second bed, are in their own way. The difficulty is obviated by placing the head of the second bed toward the foot of the first, leaving ample space between the two, that is, four or five feet, and lifting the body by two or three persons, who are then to wheel round, like a platoon of soldiers, and deposit the head of the patient toward the head of the second bed, which corresponds to the foot of the first. This fatigues

and strains the weak person much less than the common method, and is a less effort to those who lift.

If, for any reason, this removal from one bed to another is impracticable, it is easy to change even the under sheet, without much disturbance, by rolling it up from the sides towards the middle, and putting the clean one on in its place, with one half rolled up likewise ; then, getting the patient over the two rolls, on the clean half, and adjusting the side which he has left.

All sheets and pillow-cases should be well dried and warmed by a fire before being put on ; and if you bring in a fresh pillow from a spare chamber in cold weather, be sure to warm it well through and through, before you put it on a sick person's bed.

In connexion with the subject of cleanliness, it may be well to observe, that when you undertake to change the clothes of a patient, and wish the clean ones to go on warm, you must hold the most important part, such as the collar and shoulders of a shirt, close to the fire, and when hot, fold it in, and warm the part that enfolds it ; then warm the next fold, and so on, always turning the hot part in, warming and folding till the whole is one close roll, warmed through and through ; then, fold the whole up in your warm apron, and carry it so to the patient. Instead of this, many persons attempt to give you a warm garment by holding it all at once a few moments before the fire, and then carrying it across the room open to the air, which cools it before it reaches you.

All evacuations should be removed as soon as possible ; and if it is necessary to keep them for the inspection of the doctor, let them be arranged in their natural order, in some back building or unoccupied room, with covers on the utensils, and an open window near. Each evacuation kept for the doctor's eye, must be kept separate, and a stick should be laid near

for his use in examining it. When examination is not necessary, a little chloride of lime and water put in the pan will prevent all unpleasant effluvia ; but when it is, this must not be used in that way. The air of the room may be purified by placing any shallow vessel on the floor, with chloride of lime and water in it ; a table-spoonful of the lime to half a pint of water, in a deep plate, answers the purpose very well. It must be renewed every twenty-four hours.

It should be the study of all who are in attendance upon the sick, how to accomplish the most with the least stir, and the least opening and shutting of doors ; for it is very annoying to some patients, to have a person in the room continually moving about, perpetually passing from one side to the other, opening and shutting drawers and closets ; although it may be all done to put things away, and keep the apartment neat. This end should be accomplished with the least bustle possible, and the least movement, even of the quietest sort ; and for this purpose a good deal of thought and contrivance is requisite. Some nurses will do all that is necessary in a room with half the number of steps that others would take ; and the saving is as great to her patient's nerves, as to her own muscles. Never leave the room, or return to it, empty-handed ; for there will always be something to be carried out, or brought in, if you look sharp and think of everything.

The best way of sweeping a sick room is on your knees, with a short-handled brush and dust-pan ; this makes the least noise and bustle, and is the most effectual. Be sure to let the dust you raise have time to settle before you wipe the furniture, or you will labour in vain. It adds much to the neatness of the room to have a waiter on which to set all the medicines in use, and another on which to put the eatables, with a clean napkin, or towel, thrown over each.

There is a homely proverb particularly applicable to

the present subject, which is, that “one *keep-clean* is worth ten *make-cleans*.” Where stillness is so desirable, everything should be done to keep things in order. One fruitful source of stickiness and dirt would be removed in a house, if everybody would, in pouring, take care of the drop that would otherwise trickle down on the outside of the vessel. All pitchers, decanters, bottles, and phials, may be kept clean by taking off the drop that follows pouring, either against the side of the vessel you pour into, or with the cork or stopper, or some such thing ; on no occasion suffer it to run down, for it will make you double work in the end.

It is very desirable to have hot water always ready in a sick room ; and therefore a little kettle over the fire of the chamber is preferable, in cold weather, to having hot water brought up from the kitchen every time it is needed. There should also be plenty of cold water close at hand, and a supply of fuel within reach.

There is generally a good deal to be done before a patient settles for the night, and therefore the preparations should be begun in good season, that all may be done and the room still at an early hour. Sick persons are often made feverish, and their night’s rest spoiled, by not being settled early. They may have felt drowsy and inclined to sleep at nine or ten, but the continual passing in and out of the room, stirring the fire, whispering, &c., have so disturbed them, that all inclination to sleep has passed away by ten or eleven o’clock, and a restless night has been the consequence.

Nurses, and more particularly perhaps watchers, often do injury by an over-anxious desire to be attentive to the sick. They burden them by officious and unnecessary attentions. They wake them from sleep to ask them if they want anything. They urge them every few minutes to take a little drink or nourishment. In general, in acute diseases, this fault is more injurious than the opposite, of attending to

them too little. It is rarely proper to wake a patient for *anything*; and it should never be done without asking the doctor if it be proper.

If you are a watcher for the night only, be very particular to get the physician's directions from some competent person, and write them down, that there may be no mistake about the medicine, or food, to be given through the night. If you have no watch, ask for one, that you may administer things at the right hour exactly. A watch with black figures on a white ground is preferable to a gold-faced one. Look carefully round the room, and see that you have everything necessary for the patient, before the family retires for the night. Always have a second lamp in the room, in case one fails. Do not refuse all eatables for yourself, but accept of some plain food to be eaten in the night, as it partly supplies the place of sleep, and will aid you in keeping awake. When you watch in cold weather take care to be warmly dressed, for you will otherwise feel very chilly before the night is over, and may take cold. Some young persons think it generous and spirited to take no care of themselves, when they are in attendance upon others; but this is a great mistake. It is their duty to take all the care they can of their own health, without neglecting their patient.

Every young lady should know how to make a bed in the best possible manner; for, if she is so situated as not to be in the good habit of making her own bed daily, she may be called upon to do it for a sick friend, and find herself incapable of such a simple act of kindness from ignorance and inexperience. There is an art in shaking up a bed; if done in the best way, it requires less strength, and the feathers are more thoroughly stirred up with half the exertion. Much of a person's comfort, when confined to a bed, depends on having plenty of feathers under the head and shoulders, and on the under sheet being well tucked in separately from

the upper. It adds much to cleanliness and comfort, to have a thin blanket always put on next the bed beneath the under sheet. Bolster-cases, too, are far more comfortable than the sheet put over the bolster. A bed made square and even, with all the bed-clothes put on straight and well, gives an air of neatness to a chamber which it can never have when the bed is ill-made.

When a patient requires dry-rubbing with flannel, you will find woollen mittens tied on at your wrists far better than a cloth, which you must hold and rub with at the same time. You can run up a mitten in one minute, with a coarse needle and thread, and, with this tied on, you have all your strength to bestow in rubbing, instead of using any of it in holding and adjusting a towel or piece of flannel. The surface, too, is more even and agreeable to the patient. You should rub one way, not backwards and forwards, and be very careful not to injure the skin.

When hot fomentations are needed, young and tender hands are incapable of wringing the flannel out hot enough to do much good; but, where a young nurse must attempt it, she can help the matter by wetting the flannel but little, heating it with the liquid, and then folding it in a cool towel, and wringing both together.

When the feet of a patient are to be bathed in warm water, wrap a blanket or woollen gown round the tub and over the knees to keep in the steam. Have a pair of woollen socks and two coarse towels heating by the fire. Add hot water to the tub, as it cools. When the feet have been bathed long enough, take one of the towels heated very hot, and receive one foot into it, wrap it round the foot to dry all the moisture, then give it a good rubbing, and put on a warm sock; do the same with the other foot, and this will make the blood circulate quickly, and do as much good as the warm water. Feverish patients may be greatly refreshed by

sponging the face, hands, and feet with tepid water I have known children that had been restless with fever, fall into a sweet sleep whilst this was doing.

In dressing blisters, have your ointment spread thinly on both sides of a linen rag, rather larger than the blister, and lay this on a cloth (which may be cotton or linen) folded many times ; then, with a pair of sharp-pointed scissors in one hand, and a cloth in the other, make an aperture in the lowest part of the bag of water, and another little hole above to give it vent. Take away all that runs freely, but do not trouble the patient, and keep the blistered place exposed to the air, by trying to empty every drop ; it will run off by degrees into the cloths. You should break the raised skin as little as possible. This dressing should be frequently renewed at first, or the discharge may cause the rag to stick, and that will disturb the loose skin.

If you have been with persons who were foolish enough to feel any disgust at leeches, do not be infected by their folly ; but reason yourself into a more rational state of mind. Look at them as a curious piece of mechanism ; remember, that although their office is an unpleasant one to our imagination, it is their proper calling, and that when they come to us from the apothecary they are perfectly clean, though slippery to the touch. Their ornamental stripes should recommend them even to the eye, and their valuable services to our feelings.

To make them take hold in the very spot required, you have only to take a piece of blotting-paper and cut small holes in it where you wish them to bite ; lay this over the place, and put the leeches on the paper. Not liking the surface of the paper, they readily take hold of the skin, where it appears through the holes, and much trouble is thus saved. When they are filled, they will let go their hold, and you have only to put them on a deep plate, and sprinkle a little salt on their heads,

and they will clear themselves of blood ; then wash them in water with the chill off, and put them away in clean cold water.

A sponge and warm water should be used to encourage the bleeding of the patient, as long as this is necessary ; when it is sufficient, squeeze the sponge dry, and keep wiping the bitten places with it. In most cases the blood soon ceases to flow ; when the bleeding is too great, and you wish to stop it, a little lint will sometimes suffice, or the nap of a hat. But if that does not answer, shavings of leather will prove an excellent styptic ; they must be applied in a bunch, and held on tight at first. Such alarming consequences have followed from leech-bites, that I have ascertained from an experienced physician the best method of stopping their bleeding ; he says, “ The only method which I have found infallible, except tying them with a ligature, which a nurse could not do, is to roll up a little cotton, or lint, or hat-fur into a very small and hard ball, as large as a small shot, which is to be pushed, with the end of a knitting-needle or bodkin, directly into the hole made by the leech, so as to fill up the cavity entirely, and thus produce a compression on its sides.”

When persons are confined a long while to their beds, it is a great relief to sit up, supported at the back as already described ; and an additional comfort in this position is a short flannel gown to protect the part above the bed-clothes, as this can be worn without any of that incumbrance occasioned by a long gown so used.

The little cushions now made of India-rubber cloth, and inflated with air, are very useful in sickness ; and, when these cannot be had, small bags filled with feathers answer nearly the same purpose.

Some nurses forget to warm the shoes of the invalid, which is essential in cold weather.

In all your intercourse with a physician, remember that his whole course of study and practice leads him

to consider the human body as a curiously-complicated machine, all the parts of which are familiar to him, and equally honourable in his view ; and that you will best consult your own delicacy, and secure his respect, by speaking of the different functions with the same candour and composure. Answer all the questions asked you freely and directly ; and if you cultivate right views of the wonderful structure of the body, you will be as willing to speak to a physician of the bowels as the brains of your patient. The real indelicacy is in that state of embarrassment and difficulty which some feel in mentioning such things where it is necessary and proper to do it ; thus calling a person's attention to the subject under a more degrading view of it than that taken by the physician or philosopher.

The person who acts as nurse should take care to be present during the physician's visit to the patient, and should help the sick person to give an account of himself. In order to do this well, it is best to keep minutes, through the day and night, of what occurs between the physician's visits. Very short and hastily-written notes will be a great assistance to your memory ; and, with these before you, you will be able to give a full and exact report ; whereas, without such aid, you might omit to mention some symptom which would materially affect the treatment of the case. In like manner, it is best not to trust entirely to memory in following the physician's directions, but to take minutes, especially of the more essential particulars, that you may be sure not to fail.

Exactness and punctuality in administering the medicine prescribed is all-important ; and no one is fit to take care of the sick, who does not make a point of conscience of it. In measuring a dose, you should be scrupulously exact, particularly where drops are to be counted. In most cases it is right to shake a phial before you begin to pour out from it ; where this is to

be avoided, there will generally be directions to that effect. First shake the phial well, with your finger on the cork, lest it should fly out. When the stopper is thus wet, you can with it wet the edge of the phial, which should always be done before dropping anything from it; else the first drop must be counted as two. Then have ready a clean silver spoon, into which the drops may fall, so that, if you miscount, or suffer it to run instead of drop, you may pour it back into the phial, and try it again. If you are directed to give a tea-spoonful of any thing, show the spoon to the doctor, and ask if it is to be heaping full, or only even full, as there is a material difference in the size of spoons, and in the manner of filling them.

There should always be a watch, or time-piece of some sort, in or near a sick room, as punctuality in giving medicine is of great importance. The delay of half an hour may be a serious evil, not only on account of that portion being withheld, but because it may bring two doses so near together, as to render their effect different from what was intended.

If anything is left to the nurse's judgment by the doctor, she must of course exercise it to the best of her ability; but where the directions are positive, she will find it safest to abide by them very literally. It is because young women are less apt to act upon their own responsibility than those who have great experience in nursing, that some physicians prefer the attendance of girls between twenty and twenty-five in any case of dangerous sickness, to that of practised nurses who are more opinionated.

Where abstinence is recommended, and yet the case is one in which there is no want of appetite, the friend in attendance is apt to league with the patient against the doctor, and to encourage his swerving from the prescribed course. This is very wrong; for where one person suffers from abstinence in sickness, ten are

made worse by taking food when it cannot be properly digested. You should be as particular in getting the doctor's directions about diet, as about medicine, and abide by them as faithfully. If the person under your charge insists on a deviation from the prescribed rule, make a point of informing the physician. It is an injustice to him to vary from his directions, but it is doubly so to do it without telling him of it.

Want of good faith on the part of professed nurses towards doctors is almost proverbial. They have no conscience about it; they consider it no harm to give false information, to mislead and deceive a medical man about important particulars, especially about the diet of the patient. They are governed by no principle; they do not consider it a moral duty to tell the whole truth; they would stare, and so would patients too, if they were told that it was an offence against good morals, to tell a practical lie to the doctor. You ought to feel that there must be no concealments, no tricks, no half-told tale; but that the medical man must know the whole; and that you are morally bound to this course.

Some physicians are better acquainted than others with a number of simple preparations, suited to a low diet. Where a sufficient variety is not named, it will be well for you to suggest several kinds for his approval, and then vary the diet accordingly; for every woman should know how to make spoon-meats for the sick in the most wholesome and most palatable way; and, as books on cookery seldom give sufficient directions on this head, I will subjoin a few recipes for the use of young nurses.

WATERGRUEL.—First in importance comes water-gruel, which a writer on health calls, “the king of spoon-meats,” and “the queen of soups,” saying “it gratifies nature beyond all others.” Dr. Franklin's favourite breakfast was a bowl of warm gruel, in which

there was a small piece of butter, and some toasted bread and nutmeg. This, though the simplest of all preparations, is often ill-made, and therefore I recommend every woman to make a point of learning to do it in the best manner. To make good gruel, four things are necessary; the vessel in which it is made must be thoroughly clean, and free from grease; when oatmeal is used, it must be well sifted; it must be well mixed, so as to be free from lumps, and then it must be well boiled. Oatmeal or grits may be used in making gruel; the latter are generally preferred; but in this, as well as whether it should be thick or thin, and whether sweetened, or otherwise flavoured, the patient himself may generally be consulted. Care, however, must, of course, at all times, be taken, never to indulge the patient by introducing into his gruel, or other food or refreshment, anything which the doctor has prohibited in another form. In old times, no one ever thought of making gruel without seasoning it with wine, and sugar, and nutmeg; but now that such condiments are prohibited, it is more than ever important, to know how to prepare plain watergruel in the best way. Where milk is not forbidden, a small tea-cupful added to a pint of gruel, after it is made, and boiled up once in it, is a great improvement. Some invalids are better pleased with gruel served up in a tumbler, set on a small plate, with a tea-spoon beside it, than when presented in a bowl with a large spoon. But this is a matter of fancy.

MILK-PORRIDGE.—This is made nearly in the same way as gruel, only using flour instead of meal, and half milk instead of water. The whole cooking of the flour should be done with water, and the milk added afterwards, and boiled up once.

BEEF-TEA.—Take a piece of lean but juicy beef, wash it nicely, and cut it up into pieces about an inch square; put these into a wide-mouthed bottle, and

cork it up closely; then set the bottle into a pan of water, and boil it for an hour, or more if you have time. In this way you will get a pure juice of the meat, undiluted with any water, and a smaller quantity will answer the purpose of nourishment.

PEARL SAGO.—When a sick person is tired of slops, pearl sago, boiled in water till it cools to a jelly, may be used. It may be eaten with powdered loaf-sugar and a little cream.

ARROWROOT.—A tumbler-full of this may be made in two minutes, if you have boiling water at hand. Take a small basin, and put in it a tea-spoonful of the powdered arrowroot, moisten it with a table-spoonful of cold water, rub it smooth, add another of warm water, and stir it till it is perfectly free from grains; then pour on boiling water, stirring it all the time, till it changes from a thick to a transparent substance; a little lemon juice and sugar makes this a delicious draught of thickened lemonade. When prepared in the basin, pour it into a tumbler, without spilling a drop on the outside, and put it on a little plate and serve it. Arrowroot prepared with milk instead of water, is more substantial food, and must be seasoned with salt. It may be made as thick as blanc-mange, and eaten cold with cream and sugar.

CALVES'-FOOT BLANC-MANGE.—Put a set of calves' feet, nicely cleaned and washed, into four quarts of water, and reduce it by boiling to one quart; strain it, and set it by to cool. When cold, scrape off all the fat, cut it out of the bowl, avoiding the settleings at the bottom, and put to it a quart of new milk, with sugar to taste, and boil it a few minutes. If you wish to flavour it with cinnamon or lemon-peel, do it before boiling; if with rose-water or peach-water, do it after. When boiled ten minutes, strain it through a fine sieve into a pitcher, and stir it till it cools. When only blood-warm, put it into moulds that have just been wet

in cold water, and let it harden. This is a good dish for the sick or healthy.

In connexion with the duties belonging to attendance on the sick, we may consider those which belong to the sick persons themselves. In waiting upon a number of different invalids, you will learn, by what troubled you in their behaviour, what to avoid doing when you are so attended yourself; but if it has been your lot to wait only upon the considerate, disinterested, and patient sufferer, you may unconsciously become a very troublesome invalid yourself.

Whatever infirmities of temper are betrayed by the sick, consider yourself bound by the charities of your office as nurse, to bear them patiently, and never to speak of them. The only legitimate use to be made of them is that of learning to avoid similar faults, when you are yourself equally tempted.

I cannot close this chapter on nursing, without begging my young friends to bear in mind, when waiting upon the sick, that they are immortals ministering to immortals; and though this frail tenement of clay is the special object of attention, let not the more important part be forgotten or neglected. Be alive to every word, look, or gesture, that indicates the state of the patient's soul; and if he shows any inclination for communion on spiritual subjects, encourage it by your ready comprehension and sympathy. Let your acquaintance with the Bible, and other religious books, be rendered serviceable to your charge. Suffer not your own very natural diffidence on such subjects to throw a restraint over your manner, unfavourable to confidence; but do violence to your own reserve, rather than repress the feelings which may be struggling for utterance in another.

CHAPTER V.

BEHAVIOUR OF THE SICK.

SELF-CONTROL.—CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS.—ATTENTION.—TAKING MEDICINE.—RESIGNATION.

SOME persons think, that, when they are ill enough to require a physician and nurses, they may be excused from all effort at self-government, and all consideration for others; that they may be as selfish and exacting as they please; that their sufferings give them a right to tax everybody around them, to the utmost of their patience and their strength. Judging, at least, from the behaviour of some invalids, one might suppose they had deliberately come to these conclusions. Whoever has attended upon a patient of this sort, would learn better, by finding how much the trials of nursing are increased by such unreasonable conduct.

So far from being excused by illness from self-command in trifles, it is as necessary to our own comfort and recovery, as to the alleviation of our friends. Nothing is more increased by indulgence, than a fretful complaining mood; unnecessary exclamations of pain or uneasiness increase rather than mitigate suffering. By keeping our attention fixed upon our own sensations, they have more power over us than when we disregard them as much as possible; and nothing will help us to turn our mind from them more, than a just consideration of others, and a proper appreciation of all they are doing for us.

By attention to the ease of those about us, we may save them some fatigue, and avoid what I have often seen done, namely, asking for some trifle the very moment that the poor nurse drops into a chair to rest her weary limbs. When the feet are tender with much

standing, and the legs and back ache, the first few moments after sitting down this weariness is felt to the utmost degree, and to rise up again directly is a great effort. Think of all you want, while your attendant is moving about; but when she seats herself, call not upon her for anything you can do without. The observance of this single rule would save much fatigue to those who wait upon the sick.

A person who, from habitual self-discipline, is capable of fixing his attention at will on any given subject, has great advantages in sickness; for this control of mind enables a patient, when suffering considerable pain, to withdraw his attention from his own sensations, and by fixing it upon some subject of thought, or the contents of a book, to become far less sensible of bodily suffering; and when the pain begins to abate, he will be sooner aware of it, than he would if attending wholly to his sensations.

Objecting to take medicine because it tastes badly is so childish, that I should think it unnecessary to allude to it here, if I had not seen it made a source of trouble and vexation, by persons who were old enough to be ashamed of such infantile weakness. The sooner you swallow a disagreeable dose, the better; for delay only increases your repugnance, and by giving the nerves of the stomach time to come into sympathy with the brain, there is a nausea produced, which may render vain your best efforts to retain it.

Docility to your physician and those who have the care of you, is one of the first duties of the sick, and has already been sufficiently recommended in the preceding chapter.

Some invalids wish to eat before they have any appetite, and are surprised to find that their food does not taste as they expected it would. Not suspecting that the fault is in themselves, they think the cookery is wrong; and so they have a variety of things made,

hoping to relish some one of them, and thus give a great deal of unnecessary trouble. A more reasonable patient says, "When I am hungry, a biscuit, or water-gruel, will taste well to me; and till then, I had better not eat."

The views which you secretly take of your illness will materially affect your conduct under it, as well as your recovery. If you look only at second causes, and fret and repine over the circumstances which were the immediate agents in bringing on your malady, you will bear it with far less patience and cheerfulness, than you would if you saw in it the operation of wise laws, and the arrangements of a wise Providence. Resignation under suffering is a virtue which, in a remarkable degree, brings its own reward. The evil to which we are reconciled loses half its power over us. There is nothing like a filial trust in God, for harmonizing the feelings, and soothing the irritable nerves of the invalid; it often does more than medicine for his recovery.

CHAPTER VI.

DRESS.

HUMAN CLOTHING LEFT TO MAN'S REASON AND INGENUITY.
 — EXTRAVAGANCES OF COSTUME. — HOOPS. — REVOLUTIONS IN DRESS. — ENGLISH AND FRENCH FASHIONS. — CLIMATE. — STANDARD OF BEAUTY. — EFFECTS OF GOOD TASTE. — A CURIOUS COMPARISON. — RESTRICTIONS IN DRESS. — APPROPRIATENESS ESSENTIAL TO BEAUTY. — TASTE FAVOURABLE TO ECONOMY. — LOVE OF FINERY. — DRESS A TEST OF CHARACTER. — NEEDLE-WORK. — DARNING STOCKINGS. — CARE TO BE TAKEN OF CLOTHES. — NEAT HABITS. — PUNCTUALITY. — CONDUCT TO WORK-WOMEN. — BORROWING. — ACCIDENTAL EXCHANGES. — DUTY OF CULTIVATED WOMEN. — MODERN EXAMPLES.

ONE of the distinctions between the rational and irrational part of God's creatures is, that whilst the latter are clothed, by his wisdom, in the manner best suited to their mode of life, the former are left to their own guidance in everything that relates to the covering of the body. It would seem that the gift of reason was intended to be a sufficient guide in the matter ; and all sorts of materials being furnished by the bounty of Providence, and their various properties and modes of adaptation beautifully exhibited in the clothing of animals, human beings were expected to exercise their reason and their ingenuity in turning all these things to the best account.

As far as ingenuity goes, man has certainly fulfilled his destiny ; the endless variety of fabrics for covering the body, and the diversity of shapes in which they are made up, show that his fertility of invention is fully equal to the task devolved upon him. Whether his reason is as successfully employed in adapting his clothing to the necessities of his body, may be questioned, as long as we see people crippled by tight shoes

and boots, rendered stiff-necked by high and hard stocks, and youthful forms distorted, and the animal functions necessary to life and health impeded by tight lacing.

In no way has civilized man played more fantastic tricks, and sacrificed his reason more entirely to folly, than in the matter of dress. The clumsy and inconvenient garments of the savage are attributed to his ignorance of domestic arts; but what can be said in excuse for civilized man, when he wears shoes that project half a yard beyond his feet, or exchanges his own locks for an enormous periwig, filled with powder and pomatum; when the graceful motion of a lady's head is sacrificed to the stiff movements necessary in balancing a tower of linen and wire, half a yard high, with draperies that flow from the top of it to the floor; when the wavy lines of a female form are disguised under a stiff circle of whalebone, which imprisons the body from the hips upward, and a buckram cage so surrounds the lower limbs, that she can with difficulty walk or sit. Some false standard of beauty, invented perhaps to conceal deformity, is set up, and then the very bones and muscles of the perfect body must be made to conform to it. When this is carried so far as it is in the case of small feet in China, its absurdity strikes us at once; but we may find nearer home instances of a standard as false, and consequences even more fatal to health and happiness, than the little feet of the Chinese.

The history of national costume in the civilized countries of Europe shows that for many centuries the progress of art and manufactures only led to greater extravagances in dress, and more preposterous fashions.

One enormity was only displaced to make way for its opposite extreme, as in the case of the peaked-toed shoes already mentioned; these were followed by shoes of only the length of the foot, but as broad as they

were long. At one time men's coats were so short, that they resembled boys' jackets of the present day; and soon after they were so long and full, that they looked like female attire. Women's sleeves were sometimes made so long, that they were tied in knots, to prevent the wearer from treading on them; and nine yards of cloth was a moderate quantity for each sleeve; then they were made as tight as the skin, and reached no farther than the elbow. It would seem, that for centuries the whole ingenuity of nations was taxed to invent monstrous forms of clothing, as well as inconvenient and useless appendages, and that comfort and ease were the things most of all to be avoided in dress.

About the middle of the sixteenth century, stuff stays and hoops were first introduced into England; and though nothing could be more uncomfortable to the feelings, or a greater outrage upon taste and nature, they continued in fashion, except for a short period during the reign of Charles the Second, nearly two hundred years. The hoop often changed its shape and size, but was never discarded till some time after the accession of George the Third; and, as the fashion of court dresses is fixed at the commencement of a reign, and continues unchanged to its close, the long reign of that monarch caused the modes of 1760 to be witnessed in the beginning of the nineteenth century. I have seen the ladies going to attend a levee at St. James's palace, dressed in enormous hoop-petticoats, and have heard them say that it required great practice to move in them with any grace, and to avoid awkward rencontres, and an involuntary exhibition of legs from under this machinery. These hoops were constructed of whalebone and millinet, of an oval shape, the length of the oval being across the figure from hip to hip, and of the same size at top as at bottom. That part which extended beyond the waist on either side, was rounded

off and covered in with ribs of whalebone and millinet, leaving a hole in the middle, through which came the living puppet that was to carry this load. When the waists were worn short, the hoop was lifted up till it interfered sadly with the elbows, and obliged the wearer to carry her arms in a very constrained attitude before it. Over such a machine were displayed the rich materials of the court-dress.

Looking upon this grotesque contrivance, after the general fashion of hoops had passed away, and when they were gazed after, on gala days only, as a raree-show, it was difficult to imagine rational beings reconciled to them, and considering them an indispensable part of female attire, or to believe that they were once so universal in London, that maid-servants were seen washing down the door-steps in hoop-petticoats! Yet such was actually the case, before they were left off by the higher classes.

This reflection upon past fashions should make us look with jealous eyes on those which prevail in our day, in order to discover whether we are not in the practice of something which will appear equally absurd to future generations.

The French nation has long been the arbiter of fashion for most civilized countries, and the political revolution of the last century was accompanied by a revolution in dress, almost as signal; for it banished wigs and buckles, powder and pomatum, stiff stays and full petticoats, long waists, and high-heeled shoes. One extreme led to another, and the ladies who had been encased in whalebone, buckram, and abundance of quilted petticoats, stepped forth as Grecian goddesses, without any corsets, any petticoats, any fulness to their garments, or any heels to their shoes. White muslin dresses of the scantiest dimensions, drawn closely round the figure, with the shortest possible waists, and not a fold or a plait that could form any drapery, were the

order of the day in France, and quickly spread into England and America. Only look at the portraits of females, painted twenty-five or thirty years ago, or the historical pictures of that period, such, for instance, as the coronation of Napoleon, and you will be so shocked at the tight sleeves, short waists, and narrow skirts of the women, that it will be difficult to believe that such a style of dress ever looked well.

I remember when full-grown women wore dresses only a yard and a half wide at bottom, and sloped away at top to the size of the waist, so that it was difficult for a lady to step across a gutter, or into a carriage, without a great exposure of silken hose, or running the risk of splitting her skirts. The belt, too, was passed across the bosom, so as to press very injuriously upon it, and actually rode upon the shoulder-blades behind.

The old ladies of that day, who remembered with partiality the flowing draperies and full petticoats they had worn in youth, used to groan over their degenerate daughters, and say that their scanty dresses made them look as if they were stuffed into bolster-cases.

Now that both these fashions are passed away, we can form an impartial judgment of each, as we see them in pictures; and, certainly, with the exception of the hoop, the fashions before the French revolution were more dignified, decorous, and graceful, than those which immediately succeeded it. Those of the present day appear to me to hit the happy medium between both, and to unite the best part of each. If our ladies would cease to compress the waist as much as they now do, and abate something in the size of their sleeves, they need not fear the criticisms of posterity.

The influence of fashion is so strong in corrupting the eye, and perverting the taste, that it has led some persons to doubt the existence of any true standard of beauty, as applicable to costume; but as long as some

forms of dress, when out of fashion, look better to us than others, we may fairly conclude that there are some immutable principles of taste connected with the subject, and that those articles which we admire after they have ceased to be the reigning mode, conform in some degree to true taste. Such, for instance, is the simple cap, called after the most beautiful and most unfortunate of queens. When the prevailing fashions are most opposed to the flat shape of the Mary-Queen-of-Scots cap, it still appears to us beautiful; and when adopted by a modern fine lady, as her costume in a portrait, or her dress at a masquerade ball, it is pronounced highly becoming. Now this is not the case with the monstrous constructions of gauze, ribbon, and wire, that were called caps fifty years ago; nor with any of those head-dresses which outrage common sense, and set all proportion at defiance. As soon as the enormous horse-hair cushions, over which the locks were combed and plastered with powder and pomatum, went out of fashion, that style of head-dress was condemned as hideous.

The occasional triumph of good taste over fashion, is shown by the frequent return of pretty shapes into fashion. Every few years, the Scottish queen's cap is brought into vogue; and, were it not for the insatiable love of novelty, it would never be wholly laid aside. The surplice waist and Grecian bodice have an inherent beauty in them, which has caused their frequent revival, and has now kept them in fashion for several years.

Now if there are principles of true taste involved in the mysteries of a lady's toilet, is not the study of them worthy of a refined and intellectual being? and would not her time and thoughts be better spent in conforming her style of dress to them, than in eagerly following every change of the mode, dictated by the love of novelty, apart from real beauty?

I do not mean by this to recommend singularity of dress, and a wide departure from the prevailing mode; far from it; singularity is to be avoided, and she is best dressed whose costume presents an agreeable whole, without anything that can be remarked. Dr. Johnson once praised a lady's appearance by saying she was so perfectly well dressed, he could not recollect anything she had on. I would have young people of cultivated minds look at everything with an eye of taste, and, judging of the merits of a certain form of garment, apart from the charm of fashion, so modify their compliance with the reigning mode as not to sacrifice to it their sense of beauty. Mere fashion should never be allowed to triumph over common sense, or good taste, but be kept in check by both. Thus, when your dress-maker recommends you to have your skirt so long as nearly to touch the floor, let common sense interfere, and prevent your compliance with a fashion so evidently inconvenient; and when, a few months afterwards, you are urged to let her make it so short as not to reach the ankle-bone, let good taste arrest her scissors, and plead for a few inches more, for the love of grace, if not of modesty.

When, at Midsummer, your milliner shows you the last Paris fashion in a bonnet, and you see that what ought to shelter the face from the sun is so formed as to leave it entirely exposed, do not lend your countenance to anything so irrational; but call up your ingenuity to invent a modification of it, which shall combine shelter with beauty.

A pure taste in dress may be gratified at a small expense; for it does not depend on the costliness of the materials employed, but on the just proportions observed in the forms, and an harmonious arrangement of colours.

Dr. Spurzheim observed of the American ladies, that they were deficient in the organ of colour, and

said, that, on landing in New York, he was shocked to see ladies wearing, indiscriminately, all the colours of the rainbow, without regard to their complexions, or the season of the year, and often with pink, blue, and yellow on at the same time. Now, in nothing is the taste of Parisian dames more conspicuous, than in the skilful selection of colours; but there must be a sad want of taste for the fine arts, when ladies are to be seen with pink ribbons on their bonnets, and blue shawls on their shoulders, while their hands display yellow gloves and green bags; when we witness sallow complexions contrasted with sky-blue, and flushed cheeks surrounded by the hues of the rose, and pale ones made to appear more colourless by green linings. All these things will, in time, be better understood, when young persons have learned to regard dress less as a matter to be taken on trust from foreign dealers in finery than as an individual accomplishment, and to consider, that their appearance depends more on their own good taste, than the length of their fathers' purses.

I have seen two young ladies, of equal pretensions to personal beauty, one arrayed in a French embroidered pelerine that cost five pounds, the other with one made of plain cambric, edged with embroidery, that cost ten shillings. Any person who had an eye for beautiful forms would have preferred the appearance of the latter, because the proportions of this lady's cape and figure were suited to each other; whereas, the other had chosen a cape so much too wide for her shoulders, that it hung down in a dowdy style, and she was actually encumbered by her finery.

Conversing one evening, at a brilliant party, with an ingenious gentleman who had devoted much time to the fine arts, having studied architecture and practised modelling, and was also a great observer of female

attire, I was amused to hear him compare the different modes of dress to the different styles of architecture. When he saw a lady dressed with great simplicity and her hair naturally arranged, he called that style of dress Grecian. One, more elaborately attired, but still in good taste, reminded him of the ancient Roman style. A greater profusion of ornament, and less exact proportions, were compared to the Roman architecture of later times, when a spurious taste prevailed. Anything cumbrous, however rich in material or grand in its form, was called Gothic. And when a lady approached us, covered with finery that looked as if it had been showered upon her from a band-box held over head, and had stuck just where it could, he exclaimed, "Here is a specimen of the florid Gothic." He never could bear to see bows that tied nothing, rows of buttons that fastened nothing, and little appendages that had no real or apparent use. He insisted that in dress, as in architecture, *all beauty was founded in utility*, and asked me if I did not think that columns which supported nothing would look very badly. He said he liked to see borders to room paper, because it hid the terminating edge, and he liked to see ladies' gowns trimmed round the bottom of the skirt, because it hid the hem, and was a handsome finish to the figure; "but," he continued, "inasmuch as I should condemn the taste that made a paper bordering so wide as to cover half the walls, so do I denounce the fashion of trimmings which extend half way up the skirt. It has no longer the effect of a border, it is an overload of ornament, cuts up the figure, and spoils any dress."

At the time this conversation occurred, full shoulder-capes over long tight sleeves, and moderately full short sleeves, were worn; on being asked if he approved of them he said he did. "The play of the shoulder

requires room in the sleeve, and, there being that reason for some fulness, there is no objection to its being increased, so as to form an ornament."

So much for the criticisms of a man of taste on the fashions of a few years ago! If he had lived to see the exaggerations of the present day, even his command of language would have been taxed to find terms of reprobation sufficiently strong for a *leg of mutton* or a *balloon* sleeve. The sight of a woman carrying a projection on each side of her bigger than her body, would certainly look as preposterous to him, as an edifice in which the wings were larger than the main building.

Having said so much to recommend the cultivation of a good taste in dress, it may be thought by some that I have laid too much stress upon the subject, and that young women should be taught to view it as a matter of indifference. But I consider the desire of making an agreeable impression upon others by our personal appearance, as too natural a feeling to be violently rooted out of the female heart; I would only guard against its being allowed too much space there, and show how the desired end may be attained without any sacrifice of higher good.

It is in vain that some religionists have endeavoured to produce in the minds of young people a perfect indifference to dress, and that some sects have thought, by establishing a standard of plainness, to prevent them from dwelling on the subject of their outward appearance. To the initiated eye, even the uniform garb of the Quakers presents variations of fashion, and I have seen a young lady of that society, as much distressed by her new bonnet having a few plaits too many in the crown, as any fashionable belle could be at being obliged to appear in the mode of the previous year. Those who are restricted in form and colour, generally indemnify themselves by an

overweening anxiety and particularity about texture and material. The cap in which all superfluity is so retrenched, that it sits close to the head, and is allowed no fulness even in the border, is often made of muslin that costs twenty shillings a yard! The sad-coloured silks are of the richest manufacture, and every shop in a large city is often ransacked, for the exact *shade of drab* that is desired.

Nothing therefore is gained to the character of young women by these outward restrictions; but if they can be taught to give dress no more importance than it reasonably demands, and to make it an occasion of exercising good sense and good taste, their natural desire to appear well in the eyes of others may be gratified, and their characters improved at the same time.

There is too much individual character shown in dress, and it is too generally taken as an indication on which to form our opinions of people, for it to be treated as a matter of no consequence. To be sure, it shrinks into insignificance, compared with the inward adornment of the mind; but a proper regard to it will not interfere with any weightier matter. Whenever dress occupies too much time, engrosses too much thought, costs too much money, it becomes, like any other excess, a serious evil.

Personal beauty we cannot command; but there is a degree of compensation for the want of it, in the advantages of dress, which all suppose to be within their reach; and it is for this very reason, that we so often see the most elaborate and ornamental attire on the most homely persons. Their aim is good, but they mistake the means of reaching it. Allowing therefore, that, to the most rational and intellectual young lady, dress must naturally be a matter of some consequence, it is very important that her mind should be so enlightened upon the subject, and her taste so cultivated, that she may attain the desired end of being

always well dressed, with the smallest possible sacrifice of time, mind, and money.

Now there are some rules, which, being based on first principles, are of universal application; and one of these belongs to our present subject, namely, nothing can be truly beautiful which is not appropriate; nature and the fine arts teach us this. All styles of dress, therefore, which impede the motions of the wearer, which do not sufficiently protect the person, which add unnecessarily to the heat of summer, or to the cold of winter, which do not suit the age and occupations of the wearer, or which indicate an expenditure unsuited to her means, are *inappropriate*, and therefore destitute of one of the essential elements of beauty. Propriety, or fitness, lies at the foundation of all good taste in dressing; and to this test should be brought a variety of particulars, too numerous to be mentioned, but which may be thus illustrated. The dress that would be very proper on occasion of a morning visit in a city, would be so out of place, if worn by the same person, when making preserves or pastry, or when scrambling through the bushes in a country walk, that it would cease to look well; a clean calico gown and white apron would be so much more convenient and suitable, that the wearer would actually look better in them.

The rich dress and costly ornaments that become maturer life, and ceremonious parties in large cities, are unsuited to the very young, who need no such "foreign aid," and especially at the more simple assemblies of a country town. Some persons toil early and late, and strain every nerve, to procure an expensive garment, and think, that once arrayed in it, they shall look as well as some richer neighbour, whose style of dress they wish to imitate; but they forget that, if it does not accord with their general style of living, if it is out of harmony with other things, it will so strike

every-body, and this want of fitness will prevent its looking well on them.

Let a true sense of propriety, of the fitness of things, regulate all your habits of living and dressing, and it will produce such a beautiful harmony and consistency of character, as will throw a charm around you that all will feel, though few may comprehend. Always consider well whether the articles of dress which you wish to purchase are suited to your age, your condition, your means; to the climate; to the particular use to which you mean to put them; and then let the principles of good taste keep you from the extremes of the fashion, and regulate the form, so as to combine utility and beauty, whilst the known rules of harmony in colours save you from shocking the eye of the artist by incongruous mixtures.

The agreeable effect that all wish to produce in the eyes of others, depends much more on just proportions in the parts, thus forming a pleasing whole, than on little ornamental additions, which, though pretty in themselves, add nothing to the general effect. Thus, in making a pelisse, it is all-important that the cape should be of the right size and shape to agree well with the sleeves and back, and that the collar should be well proportioned to the cape; but it matters very little whether it have one or two rouleaus of satin or velvet round it, or whether it have none; and so it is with a thousand other little particulars, which take much time in the making, and add much to the expense, without really adding anything to the general good appearance.

It is a happy thing for the diffusion of good taste, that it may, in many things, be cultivated without any peculiar expense. The price of coloured muslin, or printed calico, is the same, whether the figure be pretty or ugly; the ribbon that is tastefully disposed upon the bonnet, costs no more than the one that is ill-arranged.

The shawl is the same in value whether it is dragged round the shoulders like an Indian's blanket, or worn in graceful folds. It costs no more to buy colours that harmonize, than those that do not. Indeed, true taste will generally be found on the side of economy, because simplicity is; the first cost is thus lessened, and garments that are really well-shaped are longer in favour. The exercise of good taste, therefore, need not be considered as the privilege of the few; it may regulate the toilet of her who earns what she expends upon it, as well as of her whose bills are paid by a rich father; the more it is studied, the more good sense and simplicity will be consulted, because these are included in the principles of true taste.

Whilst taste may be made to regulate the dress of all, even of the working classes, wealth, unaccompanied by it, cannot command its beautiful results. Your clothes may be ordered of the best dress-maker, and everything you wear may be of the most costly materials, and in the latest Paris fashion; and yet you may spoil your appearance by your manner of putting them on, and by wearing those articles together which do not accord. The most expensive dresses at a ball are seldom those that produce the best effect; and nothing so effectually defeats its object, as an excess of ornament.

Some persons seem to have an inherent love of finery, and adhere to it pertinaciously, even when their understandings are convinced that it is repugnant to the feelings of refined minds, and that it is a trait common to all barbarous tribes; they cannot reason upon their preferences,—they can only say, that what others condemn as tawdry, looks pretty to them.

This perversion generally takes place very early, and is much to be regretted, as it prevents the growth of purer principles. I have often thought, that the very bad taste in which dolls are usually dressed, may have

something to do with this early love of finery. Children have often a real affection for their puppets ; and when they are bedizened in all the colours of the rainbow, and decked in all the odds and ends of finery that can be stuck upon them, the little dears learn, by this association, to love this tawdry ornament ; whereas a well-dressed doll would have an important influence in establishing a correct taste in the mind of a child. In some families the dolls are dressed like babies and little children, and not as fine ladies, on purpose to make them a more rational and useful source of amusement ; and I would beg all young ladies who dress dolls for little girls, to do it in such a manner as not to foster a love of finery.

I have heard of a mother who guarded her daughters against this bad taste by making it one of their childish punishments to wear a very tawdry cap full of feathers, and flowers, and bows of ribbons of all colours. Judging by what we sometimes see worn by grown people, we might suppose that such a cap had been their reward in childhood, rather than their punishment, and was thus recommended to their best affections. The love of finery is rarely cured, and forms an insurmountable obstacle to the cultivation of a pure taste. Whosoever is conscious of possessing it, ought to mistrust her own judgment in matters of taste, and be willing to take the advice of others.

No plainness of dress can ever be construed to your disadvantage ; but ornamental additions, which in their best state are a very doubtful good, become a positive evil when defaced, or soiled, or tumbled. Shabby feathers, and crushed or faded artificial flowers, are an absolute disgrace to a lady's appearance ; whereas their total absence would never be remarked. Next to soiled stockings, soiled bonnet-caps are the most offensive things in a young lady's dress ; and the latter are but too common. Whatever approaches the face should

be particularly clean ; and it is better always to wear those materials which will wash, than to use silk net after it is at all sullied by wear. Coloured gauze handkerchiefs that are worn till they are faded, or sullied, or the colour changed by wear, are a disagreeable sight, and will spoil the neat appearance of a person, however well dressed otherwise ; cleanliness being the first requisite in a lady's dress.

Such various qualities of mind are called into action in connexion with dress, that we cannot wonder at its having great influence on the opinions that are formed of us ; and the more Christian principles prevail, the more just will be those opinions, and the more truly will dress be an indication of the character.

Who, that sees a young lady very carefully arrayed at a ball, and finds her when at home, and not expecting company, in a torn or soiled dress, can fail to draw conclusions unfavourable to the character of the individual ?

If you have a friend whose circumstances are known to be in an unprosperous condition, and you see his daughters in costly garments, what are your feelings ? Is not all admiration of their costume lost, in the sense of its betraying a want of common honesty, thus to spend the money that belongs to their father's creditors ; and does not this exhibition of lax principles do them more harm than any personal decoration can do them good ? Dress is a very fair index of a young woman's neatness, industry, economy, good sense, modesty, and good taste ; and she who is at all times, in her private as well as public hours, *perfectly well dressed*, according to all that I include in that term, must have many of the substantial qualities that constitute a good character, and are essential to domestic comfort.

The character is much more shown in the style of dress that is worn every day, than in that which is designed for great occasions : and when I see a young

girl come down to the family breakfast in an untidy wrapper, with her hair in papers, her feet slip-shod, and an old silk handkerchief round her neck, I know that she cannot be the neat, industrious, and refined person whom I should like for an inmate. I feel equally certain, too, that her chamber is not kept in good order, and that she does not set a proper value upon time. However well a lady has appeared at a party, I would recommend to a young gentleman, before he makes up his mind as to her domestic qualities, to observe her appearance at the breakfast-table, when she expects to see only her own family, and, if it be such as I have just described, to beware how he prosecutes the acquaintance.

To begin the day well, it is necessary to rise early enough to perform all the ablutions necessary to health and cleanliness, and to be neatly and completely dressed before breakfast. Your morning dress should always be such as you would not be ashamed to be seen in, by any accidental visitor; and a clean muslin collar, or ruffle, of the plainest materials, gives an impression of far greater neatness, than a coloured handkerchief. If you are suitably dressed for the business of the morning, you are ready to enter upon it at once, and much time is saved; you are not discomposed by unexpected guests; and, if particularly engaged, you can wear the same dress all day. Very young girls are apt to think, that the most important item in their dress is the material of which their frocks are made, whereas that is really of the least consequence. Clean stockings, neat shoes and strings, smooth, well-brushed hair, and delicately-clean hands, nails, and teeth, would make them look more lady-like, and better dressed, in a nine-penny calico, than they would be in the finest merino, or most costly French print, without these accompaniments.

Those things which are most essential to a neat

appearance are most within the reach of everybody, and therefore the neglect of them is not to be excused. Everybody can mend stockings and gloves, however old they may be ; everybody can avoid breaking shoe-strings by wearing them too tight, or having them become untied by tying them in false knots. Clean hands and nails, and well-brushed hair and teeth, it is in everybody's power to possess ; and without constant attention to these particulars, the most expensive garments will fail to produce the effect you desire.

The same honesty and self-respect which should keep you from making a saving that you are ashamed of, should prevent your wearing anything, even out of sight, that you be ashamed to have seen, if sudden indisposition caused it to be exposed before strangers.

It is to be feared, that the care which is bestowed upon the fashion of outer garments is greatly disproportioned to that which is given to the under clothes ; and yet a right-minded person, and one who is true to herself, would not sacrifice the inside to the outside, and would not choose to have a great disparity between the seen and the unseen.

Too large a supply of clothes is an encumbrance ; and, as there are improvements made, from time to time, in every sort of garment, it is undesirable to have a great number made at once. Your clothes are, of course, washed periodically, and that allows you time to mend them, after they come out of the wash ; but if you are liable to go from home suddenly, it is the more necessary to have many articles of apparel besides those ordinarily used between wash and wash, and they should be always ready for use at a minute's notice. It is well to have a regular place of deposit for such articles, and to keep there the newest and best of everything, whilst you use constantly those partly worn and defaced.

The sooner a garment is mended after it begins to

require it, the better. Fine muslins and laces are ruined by being washed with holes in them; and I should think very little of the notableness or neatness of a young lady who wore an embroidered cape with holes in it, that had evidently been there before it was done up. Silk stockings, too, are spoiled if not mended before they are washed; but cotton and woollen hose may be repaired afterwards.

Soiled clothes should be kept in a bag through the week, and carefully looked over before they are given out to be washed. Some neat persons make a point of marking every grease-spot by running a thread round it, that it may not be overlooked by the washer; others rub soap on the place themselves, to insure its being done. There is good reason for being particular to have your clothes washed clean, and made of a good colour. If your washing is done out of the house, and you pay for it by the dozen pieces, or by the quarter, do not be satisfied with counting the number of articles only, but make an exact list of them; so that if one is missing, you may know what it is, and so help the washer to find it; also, that if an article belonging to another is brought to you by mistake, you can return it immediately to the washer, that she may restore it to its owner.

We should gladly adopt every contrivance for saving time and abridging the labour necessarily bestowed upon dress. Those who know how to use the needle after the best fashion of our grandmothers' days may next acquire the art of slighting certain parts of their work, where it will not interfere with durability, and so save some thousand superfluous stitches in a week. But if you cannot make a fine shirt in the neatest and best manner, you need not attempt the art of slighting, as that can only be safely done by a really good needle-woman; your best endeavours will be slighting enough, no doubt.

If it has been the misfortune of any of my readers to have grown up without being made good needlewomen, the sooner they undertake to supply this deficiency the better. A woman who does not know how to sew is as deficient in her education as a man who cannot write. Let her condition in life be what it may, she cannot be ignorant of the use of her needle without incommoding herself and others, and without neglecting some important duties. Besides this, there is in this truly feminine employment a moral power which is useful to the sex. There is a soothing and sedative effect in needle-work; it composes the nerves, and furnishes a corrective for many of the little irritations of domestic life. Let no woman think herself exempt from the duty of "plying the polished shaft." In every situation of life, she will find herself the better for an early and thorough acquaintance with plain sewing. Among other good consequences, I will mention that of its enabling her to reward adequately the services of others, and preventing her from being unreasonable in her requisitions of them. The ignorant are always the hardest task-masters. In case, too, of a reverse of fortune, it is always a resource against want.

Where it is the custom of a family to read aloud during the long evenings of winter, there will always be ample opportunity for the young ladies to do their plain sewing; and this kind of occupation for the fingers is more favourable to listening attentively to what is read than any embroidery or ornamental work, as that necessarily divides the attention. In order to reap the full benefit of this delightful mode of passing an evening, you must have your work well prepared before the hour of reading comes, and your work-box properly furnished with the implements and materials you may need; for it spoils the pleasure of all, for one to be obliged to leave the circle in search of anything. Avoid

all whispering about your work, all borrowing of scissors and reels of cotton. Each one should be properly supplied, and all debateable points be settled, before the reading begins ; and then the mind should be fixed on the book whilst the fingers move mechanically. A want of attention to these little details will convert what ought to be a most agreeable and instructive occupation into an occasion of vexation and disappointment.

There are few things more trying to the temper than reading aloud to inattentive persons, or more discouraging than frequent interruptions : the father or brother who has been thus annoyed, will rarely be found willing to repeat the experiment. If, therefore, you would secure the pleasure of being read to, come to it well prepared ; and if you find yourself otherwise, you had better sacrifice your work, or your share in the reading, than disturb the whole party by moving to and fro after what you want. Where most of the winter-evenings are thus spent, a young lady will find it easy to do all her own mending and plain sewing, as well as to help her mother with the shirts and stockings of her father and brothers.

Most girls consider it a settled thing, that darning stockings is the worst of drudgery, and, without entering at all into the merits of the case, they cultivate an unreasonable dislike to it. This prejudice is often handed down from mother to daughter ; and, as it is a business which quickly accumulates on being neglected, the basket of unmended stockings is the dread of all the household. But as there is nothing in the whole economy of dress that turns to such good account as good darning, it is unwise to make it a bugbear by your manner of regarding it or doing it. The stitch used in darning stockings is the same as that for working lace, which was a favourite employment a little while ago : there can therefore be nothing pecu-

liarily unpleasant in the stitch. There is nothing intricate and difficult in the art: when you have chosen a needle and thread of the proper size for the texture of your hose, and have only to darn thin places, it is the easiest and prettiest of stitchery, and has this advantage over lace-work, that it claims much less of your attention whilst doing, and, when done, it will add much more to your appearance and comfort, than yards of lace would do. Neat-looking stockings are so indispensable to a lady, and they so soon look shabby, if not taken good care of, and well repaired, that your time cannot be better bestowed on any article of dress than on your hose. If you look with contempt upon this branch of female industry, and darn your stockings in a great hurry, just when you want to put them on, it will always be an irksome task; but take a pair of stockings in hand, when nothing presses you for time, and darn them whilst listening to reading or conversation, and you will find it one of the most agreeable of mechanical employments. If you are not hurried, you will seek out all the thin places, and feel a satisfaction in guarding them from becoming holes; thus securing a neat stocking, and preventing accidents of the most mortifying kind. For the very reason that stockings are so often badly mended, suffered to become full of holes, and then hastily cobbled up, the art of repairing them has fallen into disrepute; girls take it to be a matter of course that they must hate darning stockings. I have seen a lady as much stared and wondered at for saying that she liked to darn, as if she had expressed a fondness for the toothach. If any one wishes to overcome this imaginary evil, let her begin with a new set of stockings, take the whole care of them herself, and mend them at a stated time every week. If you are so situated in life that you can hire others to do your needle-work for you, you had better let a sempstress do any other thing than darn your stockings. That sort

of work is so easily slighted, or done clumsily, that it requires the owner's interest in the matter to secure its being well done. Persons differ very widely in their standard of neatness with regard to stockings; and as the darning should be adapted to the texture of the hose, and the fastidiousness of the wearer, each one is best able to suit herself. If you would save yourself innumerable stitches, always line the heels of stockings, and run the thin places. The tops of old hose make the best linings, and, if put in slightly, and changed as soon as worn out, will save the stocking from holes for a long while.

There is a great difference in the manner of wearing our apparel, so as to make it look well for a longer or shorter time. Some girls destroy their clothes in a very heedless way; and their parents, from a false delicacy or generosity, say nothing about it, but pay the cost and bear the inconvenience. Many articles of dress are more injured by want of care in the disposal of them when off the person, than when in wear; capes, collars, and bows of ribbon are of this description. If not put away properly, they are rumpled and made to look worse than when worn carefully for a week. Smoothing such things with a hot iron turns them yellow, and, if the least sullied, it makes it difficult to wash them clean. An amusing writer who has lately travelled in France, says a great deal on the care which French ladies take of their clothes when not in wear. She describes how they fold up their dresses, and pin them up in towels, and place them carefully on a shelf. It seems to have struck her very forcibly, because it was so different from the habits she had observed in her own country. The French certainly understand the whole art of making the best appearance upon the smallest means; and, as every one can do something better with her money than spend it unnecessarily upon her own dress, it is well to learn the

lesson which they can teach. Other good habits will help you in this ; if you are orderly, and have a place for everything, and put everything in its place the moment you take it off, this will be a great means of preserving your clothes in nice order. The practice of coming into the parlour with your walking-dress on, and taking it off there, throwing your bonnet down on one chair and your cloak on another, letting your boas sweep the floor, and the collar that is pinned to your cloak, be all tumbled up with it ; and then, when at last you must carry them away, gathering them up anyhow, and holding your bonnet by one string, or with a gripe of the front that bends it ; all these little things will in three months greatly deface your clothes, and make them look much more shabby than those which are always carried up stairs at once on the person of the wearer, and put away as they are taken off. Bonnets are very much injured by lying about ; they should be put into their proper box the very moment they are taken off the head, unless they are dusty or damp. In the former case, blow or wipe off the dust ; in the latter, adjust the bows whilst you dry them ; for a bonnet should always be put away in proper order to be worn again at a minute's notice.

Veils should be taken off and folded up, not left tied to the bonnet and crumpled up in the band-box. All shawls should be folded up, square and even, in the same folds, every time they are laid by ; and if much rumpled in wearing, it is well to put them under some weight, to be pressed smooth before they are worn again. Gloves look well much longer, if, instead of turning one in the other, all in a crump, you pull out the fingers and stretch the glove lengthwise, and, laying one on the other, put them by without any folding. Belts should be kept smooth, care being taken in putting them away. Shoes are made shabby by standing about your chamber, or being kept under beds and

bureaus. The dust gets into them, and makes them look irrecoverably dingy and worn before their proper time. Have a box or a covered shelf in a closet appropriated to shoes, and make a point of keeping them in their place.

Very nice dresses, which are only worn occasionally, should not be left hanging up in closets for weeks and months to gather dust, unless they are turned wrong side out, and hung up by the belt hooked together, and have the waist turned down within the skirt. But if you have enough drawers or shelves, they had better be folded and pinned up in towels, and put away from dust and air. Dresses in every-day wear may very well be hung in closets, and should be placed there the moment they are taken off. Night-clothes should be hung up to air through the day, instead of being placed under the pillow.

Some young ladies, who put their chambers in good order every morning, are content to go to bed at night, leaving them in the utmost confusion. They do not consider how liable every one is to sudden indisposition, or to an alarm of fire, or to some contingency that would introduce their family, and even strangers, into the apartment, nor how mortified they would feel to see a gentleman stumbling over their petticoats, dropped in a ring in the middle of the floor, or kicking a stray shoe or stocking before him. It is best to be always prepared for any exposure, by an undeviating practice of neatness and order. Every article taken off the person at night should have an appropriate place; undergarments especially should be so arranged, near your bed, as to be well aired without exposure in full view, and to be easily seized and put on, in case of an alarm. Shoes should have a fixed place, where you can always find them in the dark. Stockings should be drawn one within the other, and include the garters, that they may not be missing when wanted in haste. Chairs

should be set in their places, and all things so arranged as not to be stumbled over in the dark, should you have occasion to rise in the night.

Those who sleep in short cotton gowns generally use the same article as a dressing-gown, over which they comb and brush their hair; but this is untidy, as loose hairs will lodge in the folds, and so be carried to bed with you. Have a separate gown for this purpose, or else pin a napkin round your neck that will cover your shoulders, and receive everything that comes from your hair. It aids a person in being very complete in performing the duties of the toilet, morning and evening, to have a comfortable and seemly dressing-gown, double in winter and single in summer, and long as your skirts are, in which you would not mind being seen by any of your family. With such a garment on, you will be more likely to give the proper time and attention to combing and brushing your hair, cleaning your teeth and nails, &c.; and, being made very large and loose, it allows you the free use of your arms in shaking up your bed. Such a garment should never be worn about the house; but in your own chamber it favours neatness and refinement.

The chief brushing and combing you give your hair is best done at night, when you are mistress of your time, and can bestow as much as is necessary to make your head perfectly clean. I would not recommend a hundred strokes of the brush every night, which is what a celebrated lady nightly bestowed on her raven locks; for some heads require much less than others; but I would say, brush till your locks are free from every speck, and in perfect order for dressing in the morning. If your hair is of the dry kind, that requires oil, beware of using what is rancid, as the odour of it is very disagreeable. If you curl your hair at night, use clean light-brown paper, not newspaper, for that is dirty stuff; and make your nightcap cover your curl-papers,

for there is no more frightful appendage to a woman than they are.

But to return to the proper care of clothes. As a general rule, those things which are injured by washing should never be worn next the skin; such as woollen and silk shawls, the sleeves of silk dresses, &c. Be not shocked to be told that it will grease them; for the fairest and most delicately-clean skin is so constituted as to be kept soft and healthy by a lubrication of oil, insensible to the eye, unless allowed to accumulate on something that will not bear washing, but sufficiently evident where this is the case. The slightest texture of muslin interposed, and frequently changed and washed, will prevent this unsightly accumulation. I have seen the back of a high-necked dress that was not lined, so changed where it came in contact with the skin, as to mark distinctly the outline between that and the part which had other clothing under it. This is a disgusting sight, and might subject a young lady to the imputation of having a peculiarly greasy skin, when that was not really the case. A refined person, who would not like to have such marks seen on any part of her attire, should always have a material that will wash next to her skin, and submit, even in summer, to the additional heat of muslin sleeves under silk ones. These are better than linings, as they can be washed more easily.

New gloves are often sacrificed by being drawn on too hastily; and if this is done just as you are leaving the house for a party, you must either keep your friends waiting whilst you change them, or appear in torn gloves. It is better to fit them to your hand deliberately before they are worn.

This leads me to recommend the practice of laying out the things to be worn on any particular occasion some hours before you dress. In this way you ascertain whether everything is in order, in time to supply

a deficiency, or make any necessary repairs. By deciding beforehand what you will wear, you are more likely to do it wisely than if it is left to the time of dressing, and more likely to be ready punctually. By having your clothes laid out in readiness, you avoid confusion, and that mislaying of things which so often occasions delays. If you are in the habit of putting away each article as you take it off, your room will not get into that state of disorder, in which what you most want has disappeared, and cannot be found without much loss of time. Whenever this does happen, the best way to find the missing article is to begin putting away everything that is lying about. When you take up anything to look under it, you may as well restore it to its proper place as lay it down again in the same spot, and so put your room in order and search for what is lost at the same time.

Although it is a great pity to devote more time to dressing than is actually requisite, it is necessary to punctuality that you should allow yourself as much as it will take. If you cannot learn to quicken your movements, or save time by due preparation beforehand, you must begin earlier; for, by not being ready at the hour appointed, you are guilty of a breach of politeness to all concerned, and you rob them of two most valuable possessions, time and patience. Unpunctual people generally live under a delusion as to the time that it takes them to do things; they wilfully shut their minds to the conviction, that if it took them a whole hour to dress for a party last week, it will probably take as long this. They seem to have a dread of being ready before the time, as if it would do them some harm to be dressed and in the parlour ten minutes before the appointed hour; but no dilatory person can become punctual, unless she overcome that repugnance, and make an effort to be ready before the time.

The want of punctuality is such a flagrant violation of the rights of others, that it will be more fully treated of elsewhere ; but it is so often occasioned by delays in dressing, that it naturally connects itself with the subject of this chapter.

There is another topic intimately connected with dress, which involves very serious consequences to a suffering portion of the community. I allude to unreasonable exactions upon dress-makers, milliners, and sempstresses. The young belle, who is very desirous of having a dress made, in order to wear it on a particular occasion, near at hand, urges her dress-maker to get it done at a certain time, little thinking of the aching sides, and throbbing temples, and smarting eyes, and toil-worn fingers, that must be overtasked, and deprived of proper natural rest, in order to gratify her in this particular. She converses about it with the flourishing head of a fashionable establishment, and thinks not of the pale and lean girls who are to do the work, and lose a night's sleep to accomplish it. A peep behind the scenes would so touch the sympathies of a generous nature as to make the new dress lose all its importance, when viewed in connexion with the sufferings of those who are to make it.

When you are promised an article on Saturday night, and it does not come till Sunday morning, you may be sure that wholesome rest, if not a portion of the Sabbath, has been sacrificed to its completion. Who that has a heart to feel would not rather wear the old bonnet another Sunday, than be the means of overworking a fellow-being ? These things, once known and borne in mind, must influence the conduct of gentle natures towards those they employ to work for them ; and each one that shows an interest in their welfare does something towards ameliorating their condition.

Let no one try to satisfy her conscience by saying, " If these work-women do not toil for me, they will for

some one else, and I may as well reap the benefit as my neighbour." Each one is bound to do right for herself, whether any good results from it to others or not. But there is such power in goodness, that we cannot doubt the importance to others of any one person's acting conscientiously in such matters, whilst to the individual herself it is of vital consequence.

Borrowing clothes is a practice that can hardly be indulged in, even among sisters, without an unjustifiable infringement of the rights of others. It is generally those who are the most careless and improvident that wish to borrow, and they are least to be trusted with what is not their own. To wish to make an appearance beyond your own resources by borrowing the ornaments and rich clothing of others, is mean in the extreme. Friends or sisters may occasionally accommodate each other by the loan of a small article; but the favour should be reciprocal, never on one side only, or it becomes a burden to the lender, and an indulgence of selfishness in the borrower. I have known sisters so mean and exacting, as to make a practice of supplying their own deficiencies by borrowing constantly of one more provident than the rest. The clean bonnet-cap was hardly prepared before it was borrowed, and the prettiest belt or cape was oftener worn by these harpies than by the rightful owner.

It is very allowable to borrow a shawl or cloak, where you would otherwise suffer for the want of one; but, in that case, beg for the least valuable one your friend has; wear it more carefully than you would your own; fold it up as soon as you take it off, and put it in a safe place till returned, which it should be as early as possible, carefully wrapped up and directed, lest it should be injured or lost on its way back.

If, at a party, you accidentally exchange some article of dress, and find, on returning home, that you have another person's hood, or shawl, or over-shoes, lose no

time in sending them back the next day to the house of entertainment, with a note describing your own article, and requesting that inquiry may be made for it when the article sent is called for.

If this were a general practice, such mistakes would be easily rectified ; but if you do not make the house where the exchange took place a point of meeting, to set things right, you may never find your own, or restore what you have taken of another ; and, whether you are a gainer or loser by the mistake, you should be equally anxious to correct it. I have known a very valuable boa exchanged at a party for a miserable little string of coarse fur ; and if the person who made the advantageous exchange had taken half the pains to restore what did not belong to her, that the loser did to regain her own, it would have been forthcoming ; but, from some obliquity or inefficiency, the valuable boa was lost for ever to its rightful owner. I have heard girls triumph in an advantageous exchange of this sort, considering it only a good joke, instead of a piece of dishonesty, and it certainly is nothing less to retain an article belonging to another without an effort to find the owner.

I must not dismiss the subject of dress without reminding those ladies who are deeply interested in their studies, and are pursuing knowledge with an eagerness that leaves them little time or inclination for the duties of the toilet, that they are responsible to their sex for bringing literary pursuits into disrepute by neglecting their personal appearance. Let them simplify their dress as much as they can, but at the same time they should be even more careful than others to be always neatly equipped, and sufficiently in the fashion to avoid singularity. Let them consider that, for many years, it was a standing argument against giving daughters a liberal education, that if they became learned or literary, they would inevitably

be slatterns in their dress, and in their conduct of household affairs.

The connexion, in many minds, is still very close between *blue stockings* and *dirty stockings*; let nothing be done to strengthen it; but let ladies of the present day who have highly cultivated minds, make a point of showing the world that their attainments are not incompatible with due attention to domestic affairs and personal neatness. Let them follow the example of those distinguished female writers of the last half century, who have done so much to destroy the prejudice of the other sex against learned ladies.

I can assure my young friends, from personal observation, that the classic lore of Mrs. Barbauld never interfered with the most exact attention to personal neatness and propriety of dress; that the poetic inspiration of Mrs. Joanna Baillie never prevents her from being a notable housewife, a very good dresser, and the best of neighbours to the sick and the afflicted. Neither do the scientific researches and high mathematical attainments of Mrs. Somerville interfere with other pursuits more common to her sex, such as botany, mineralogy, music, and painting, whilst the peculiar grace and beauty of her toilet would lead a stranger to suppose, that more than common attention had been bestowed upon it.

CHAPTER VII.

MEANS OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT.—OBJECTIONS ANTICIPATED.

—THE LAWS OF OUR BEING ARE FIXED.—EXTRACT FROM DR. COMBE.—ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY OF PHYSIOLOGY.—STRUCTURE OF THE SKIN.—CLEANLINESS.—WARM AND COLD BATHING.—MUTUAL DEPENDENCE OF THE SKIN AND THE LUNGS.—CIRCULATION OF THE BLOOD.—EXERCISE.—COLD EXTREMITIES.—THE LUNGS.—DIGESTION.—FOOD.—DRINK.—FASTING THE BEST CURE.—CONSTIPATION.—TIGHT LACING.—TIGHT SHOES.

WERE this chapter headed with, “The Means of Preserving Beauty,” how many eyes, that will now turn away from it with indifference, would then be riveted to it; and yet a better understanding of the subject would make those who are most anxious to preserve their good looks, seek most eagerly to know how to preserve their health, for without that, no one can long be beautiful, and with it the plainest person is sure of one kind of comeliness.

We think with horror of that sort of suicide which is committed by hanging, drowning, or poisoning; but take no note of the more numerous, and more responsible cases that are to be found among those who destroy their health by inattention to the laws which a wise Creator has affixed to the human constitution. Ignorance, a blamable ignorance, of the structure and functions of those organs on which life depends, has occasioned the death of thousands.

Women study all the arts and sciences which are fitted to embellish life, whilst they fail to become acquainted with that one subject, on which depends the exercise and full enjoyment of all else that they

know. They spend years in learning to sing, without devoting one hour's attention to the construction of that wonderful instrument, the lungs. They pursue all other kinds of knowledge, and neglect that which is necessary to the due observance of the laws of their being; and, by ignorantly transgressing those laws, they bring on disease, and are prematurely cut off in the very bloom of life.

On no other subject connected with their temporal well-being, are persons so blind to their own interests. Suppose, for instance, that you inherited from your parents a valuable piece of mechanism, by means of which the most curious and complicated movements of puppets were performed, the finest music was produced, and a succession of landscapes was presented, in which motion was given to the trees, as if waving in the wind, brooks ran and bubbled, and clouds appeared floating in the air; suppose that the machinery which produced these curious results was all concealed in a closely-shut box, which could not be opened without destroying the instrument for ever. You received with the box a few directions about winding it up, and pulling certain strings and touching certain springs, at stated times, without knowing the connexion between these and the hidden movements within. This ignorance would inevitably lead to mistakes in its management; and if by chance any part were out of order, your attempts to rectify it would be made at random, and be as likely to do harm as good. Would you not, in such a case, be very desirous to learn something of the internal structure of this curious and valuable machine, more especially if by a spell your enjoyment of life, and life itself, were made to depend on its being kept in good order?

If a friend should come to you and say, "I have seen many such boxes before, I have seen them opened, and know exactly how they are constructed, and why

touching this spring produces one effect, and touching that, another; I know too what ails your box, and makes its music imperfect, and its movements incomplete; shall I explain it to you?"—would you not eagerly receive the proffered information?

And yet your own bodies are full of machinery far more curious than was ever imagined by man, performing far more complicated movements than we can number or describe, and on your right understanding of their proper use and treatment depend, not only the prolongation of your life, but the power of enjoyment, activity, and usefulness, while it lasts.

What avails it, that you have every luxury which wealth can procure, or that you possess the kindest friends, and the finest powers? Without health, you can neither enjoy the one, nor exercise the other.

Look back upon your childhood, and see how many of your early schoolmates are numbered with the dead, how many have grown up pale and feeble, how many are habitual invalids; look at those who are among your mother's friends, and see who of them are possessed of good health, and can perform all the duties of life without hindrance from bodily infirmity; and then consider, whether, for the sake of preserving this rare and valuable possession from the evils occasioned by ignorance, you are not willing to take a little pains to inform yourself upon the subject.

Perhaps you are weary of hearing it said, that bathing, and friction, and exercise, are necessary to health, that breathing the air of hot rooms and crowded theatres is hurtful to it, that certain kinds of food are good for the digestion and other kinds are bad; but will it not interest you to know *how* bathing affects the skin, and, by understanding its curious structure, see for yourself what is necessary to its being in a healthy condition? Would you not like to hear how your lively feelings depend on your circulations, and how

these are quickened by the motions of the muscles, which we call exercise? Will it not interest you to know how that important organ, the lungs, is rendered liable to become the seat of the most incurable of diseases, and how its functions can best be kept in a healthy state? Will you not be willing to learn how the stomach operates on the food, and why eating between meals is unwholesome, why suppers disturb the sleep, and why pound-cake gives you the head-ache?

“Let it not be said, that knowledge of this description is superfluous to the unprofessional reader; for society groans under the load of suffering inflicted by causes susceptible of removal, but left in operation in consequence of our being unacquainted with our own structure, and with the relations of the different parts of the system to each other and to external objects.”

How few persons understand the uses of the skin, or how to preserve its freshness and health! Yet it is an organ on which the comfort of the whole body depends. “No one can be happy who does not perspire,” said an old lady to me one day, and greatly was I amused at the putting together of two things which I had never before thought of as having any connexion; but, on reflection, I found the old lady was right.

Our bodies are constituted according to certain laws, which are as fixed as those which regulate the planets in their orbits; but with this difference, that, whilst the heavenly bodies have no power to deviate from their appointed path, to man is given that free agency which leaves him at liberty to maltreat his own body, though he cannot do it without incurring a penalty, that of introducing disease into his system. The law is just as absolute in the one case as in the other; and it is the prerogative, as well as the duty, of man to acquaint himself with it, and obey it.

Some of these laws we easily understand, and readily obey. All admit that we cannot live without food,

and sleep, and fresh air. It is equally certain, but not equally obvious, that we cannot enjoy full health unless our food be of a proper quality, taken in proper quantities, and at proper times; and that, to answer its full purpose of refreshment, sleep must be taken in the right quantity, and at the right time. Because the consequences of breaking these laws do not immediately appear, we expect to escape them altogether. Some persons ignorantly boast that they are just as well without exercise as others are with it. Some say they have learned to do with only four hours' sleep, and others insist upon it that ten or twelve hours do not injure them. One young lady will tell you that dissipation agrees with her, and her lungs are proof against the vitiated atmosphere of crowded rooms; another will gravely assure you that rising early gives her the headach, and strong coffee never does her any harm. But, sooner or later, nature will vindicate her rights, and the violator of her laws will find that there are few exceptions to her rules. The elasticity of youth may resist such maltreatment for a while; but at last, and often without warning, the health fails, a long train of diseases follows, the physician catechizes his patient, and finds in her acknowledged way of living abundant reason for the complaints that have been induced.

“Happy would it be for suffering man,” says Dr. Combe*, “could he see beforehand the great amount of punishment which his multiplied aberrations from the laws of physiology are sure to bring upon him. But as, in the great majority of instances, the breach of the law is limited in extent, and becomes serious by the frequency of its repetition, rather than by a single act; so is the punishment gradual in its infliction, and slow in manifesting its accumulated

* *Principles of Physiology.*

effect; and this very gradation, and the distance of time at which the full effect is produced, are the reasons why man, in his ignorance, so often fails to trace the connexion between his conduct in life and his broken health. But the connexion subsists, although he does not regard it, and the accumulated consequences come upon him when he least expects them.

“ Thus, pure air is essential to the full enjoyment of health; and reason says, that every degree of vitiation must necessarily be proportionally hurtful, till we arrive at that degree which destroys life. When we state this fact to a delicately-constituted female, who is fond of frequenting heated rooms and crowded assemblies, and call her attention to the hurtful consequences of inhaling such vitiated air, her answer invariably is, that the closeness and heat are very disagreeable, but that they rarely injure her; by which she can only mean, that a single exposure to them does not always cause an illness serious enough to send her to her bed, or excite acute pain; although she admits that such results have sometimes followed. An intelligent observer, however, has no difficulty in perceiving that they do hurt her; and that, although the effect of each exposure is so gradual as not to arrest attention, it is not less certainly the cause of that general delicacy of health by which she is characterised, and from which no medical treatment can relieve her, so long as she pursues the same course.”

Witness the inroads made on the health and beauty of young girls that have been during a whole season engaged in fashionable amusements. You may read, in those pallid cheeks and hollow eyes, in that languid air and shrunk form, a lesson on the evil influences to which they have been exposed. Instead of having been braced by winter frosts and strong out-door exercise, to bear the east winds and variable temperature of spring, they are so enfeebled as to become the ready

victims of disease. If not fatally attacked, the more active out-door habits of summer restore a portion of their lost vigour ; and happy would it be for those of delicate constitutions if they would profit by this practical lesson, and learn in future to avoid such fruitful causes of disease and death. But, instead of this, the health and strength acquired in the journeys and rambles of summer are often lavished on the round of fashionable amusements in winter.

If I could hope that my readers would avail themselves of the useful advice which is so amply tendered by eminent medical men, I might save myself the trouble of entering further upon those subjects of which they have treated so fully and so ably ; but, knowing the prevailing indifference upon those topics, I cannot feel excused from giving some brief notice of them, though I hope none who take any interest in what is here said, will fail to prosecute the inquiry further. I am aware that, in doing this, you would have to encounter some prejudices, particularly among your elderly friends, who, having passed the meridian of life without any such knowledge as you are seeking, are apt to discourage others from the pursuit. They are liable also to confound a knowledge of the structure and functions of the different organs with the study of professional treatises on disease, which are not to be recommended to a young reader. It is the means of preventing, not of curing disease, that you should study. The general acquaintance with the structure and functions of the different organs essential to life, which I would urge upon you, would make you less liable to be imposed upon by the nostrums of quacks who pretend to have discovered a specific for every form of disease ; it would enable you to discover the earlier symptoms of derangement, and so prevent much serious illness ; it would render you a more intelligent listener to the directions of the physician, either in your own case or that of a

friend ; it would prevent your ignorantly ruining your own health ; and, if properly impressed with the importance of the subject, it would make you so arrange your plans of life, as to secure you from a wanton sacrifice of one of its greatest blessings.

If my limits would admit of my entering into a full description of the structure of the skin, you would find that, simple and uniform as it appears, “ it is a compound of many elements, and the seat of as great a variety of functions ; and that, like every other part of the animal frame, it displays the most striking proofs of the transcendent wisdom and beneficence of its great Creator.” In order to understand anything of its uses, it is necessary to bear in mind that the skin is composed of three layers, each of which answers a purpose peculiar to itself. The outermost layer, that which is visible, is called the *epidermis*, *cuticle*, or *scarf-skin*. It is very thin, as we may see when it is raised in blisters. It has no blood-vessels or nerves ; it does not bleed when punctured, nor feel any pain, or school-girls would not be so fond of running pins and needles into it for amusement.

Immediately beneath the scarf-skin, and between it and the true skin, is a ~~thin soft covering~~ called the *mucons coat*, which protects the nerves and vessels of the latter, and gives them their requisite softness and pliancy. It is the seat of the colouring-matter of the skin, and determines the complexion, from that of the negro, to the fairest lady in the land.

“ The third and most important layer is the *dermis*, or true skin. It is of considerable thickness, full of nerves and blood-vessels, very delicately organized, and endowed with the principle of life in a high degree. Besides being the beautiful and efficacious protector of the parts beneath it, it is the instrument of four important functions ; first, as an exhalant of the waste matter from the system ; second, as a joint regulator of

the heat of the body; third, as an agent of absorption; and fourth, as the seat of sensation and touch. This true skin, or, as we shall now call it, the skin, is a dense, firm tissue of nerves and blood-vessels, as may be shown by the fact, that you cannot puncture it anywhere with the finest needle, without drawing blood and causing pain, that is, without opening a blood-vessel and transfixing a nerve."

The whole animal system is in a state of constant decay and renovation. Of the food we take, a part goes to supply the waste, and that which is not nutritive passes off by the bowels; but, besides this excretion, there is a large quantity of old, altered, useless particles perpetually thrown out from the body, by means of visible and invisible excretions, and the skin is one of the principal outlets for this waste matter.

This perpetual exhalation, being in the form of vapour, is invisible under ordinary circumstances, and is called the *insensible perspiration*. It is of the same nature as that which is sensible, and which, when it shows itself in drops, is called *sweat*. "Taking even the lowest estimate of Lavoisier, we find the skin endowed with the important charge of removing from the system about twenty ounces of waste matter every twenty-four hours; and when we consider that this large quantity of vapour is sent forth in so divided a state as to be invisible, and that it is given out by the very minute blood-vessels of the *true skin*, we perceive at once why these are so extremely numerous that a pin's point cannot touch any spot without piercing them; and we see a sufficient reason why checked perspiration should prove so detrimental to health, because, for every twenty-four hours during which such a state continues, we must either have twenty ounces of useless and hurtful matter accumulating in the body, or have some of the other organs of excretion grievously overtasked, which obviously cannot happen without disturbing their regu-

larity and well-being. People know the fact, and wonder that it should be so, that cold applied to the skin, or continued exposure in a cold day, often produces a bowel complaint, a severe cold in the head or chest, or inflammation of some internal organ ; but were they taught, as they ought to be, the structure and uses of their own bodies, they would rather wonder that it did not always produce one of those effects."

Dr. Combe traces, in the most interesting way, the connexion between suppressed perspiration and the production of individual diseases; and shows the sympathy which exists between the skin, the bowels, the lungs, the liver, and the kidneys, because they have all one common office to perform, that of throwing waste matter out of the system, each in a way peculiar to its own structure ; and I earnestly recommend my readers to pursue the subject in his little treatise, if they would learn how to guard themselves from the numerous diseases that arise from checked perspiration, and if they would avoid doing from ignorance that which may entail upon them consumption and early death.

The second important use of the skin is that of regulating its temperature. Animal heat is constantly generated and constantly expended by our bodies, and it is necessary to life and health that the proper balance should be maintained between these two processes. During repose, or passive exercise, the surplus heat is carried off by the insensible perspiration from the lungs and skin, and by contact with the colder air ; but when the amount of heat is increased by active exercise or otherwise, an increased expenditure becomes necessary. This is effected by the skin and lungs being excited to a higher action, by the latter sending out breath loaded with vapour, and the former exhaling its fluid so rapidly as to form sweat. Every one has experienced the sensation of relief from heat, when we pass from a

burning, dry skin to a copious perspiration, either in a fever, or in a warm day in summer. Women who do not easily perspire, lose their health when they do the work of a cook in summer; whilst those who do, can bear the heat of the fire without injury.

“The skin exhales most in a warm, dry atmosphere, because the air then dissolves and carries off the secretion as fast as it is produced;” and for this reason we can best support the heats of summer when they are unattended by moisture in the air.

The third use of the skin is that of absorbing small particles from the air or any other substance in contact with it. The power of absorption is made use of where we rub ointment or liniments on the body of a patient, or where, by inoculation, a small portion of infectious matter, inserted under the cuticle, affects the whole system. The process of absorption is carried on by a separate set of exceedingly small and numerous vessels in the skin; these are always most active in a moist atmosphere, which is the reason why night air is often unwholesome, and why miasma or bad air is peculiarly hurtful in marshy districts, and why warm woollen clothing is more needed in damp weather than dry, even though the temperature should be higher.

The insensible perspiration, or animal effluvium, when it does not pass off into the air, but is fixed and concentrated upon the skin, becomes an energetic poison, and acts upon the system as such, by means of the absorbent vessels; hence the danger to the health from want of cleanliness, and the fatal consequences which have frequently followed the use of water-proof dresses by sportsmen and others.

The last of the four uses of the skin which I propose to consider, is that of its being the seat of sensation and touch. If we had no nerves on the surface of our bodies to warn us, by pain, of external injuries, we

might seriously hurt them without being aware of it. Every part of the true skin is therefore provided with innumerable little filaments from the nerves of sensation, which convey to the mind accurate intelligence of the impressions made upon the body. These sensations would be too acute if the cuticle were not interposed between the nerves and external objects, as we may observe when any accident removes a portion of the epidermis, or scarf-skin; but through this insensible outside wrapper, a degree of sensibility is preserved which is both useful and agreeable.

It is the nervous tissue of the skin which informs us of the temperature of the bodies around us, and imparts to the mind the sensation of warmth or coldness. In a healthy state, this sensation is a correct index of the real temperature; but in disease, we often complain of cold and shivering when the skin is positively warmer than usual. In this way those whose digestion is weak, and whose circulation is feeble, complain habitually of cold hands and feet, where others, differently constituted, experience no such sensations. Exercise dissipates this feeling and increases heat, by exciting the circulation of the blood, throwing more of it to the surface, and thereby increasing the action of the vessels and nerves of the skin.

Some mental emotions operate on the skin, and impair its functions, much in the same way as cold. Grief, fear, and the depressing passions, by diminishing the afflux of arterial blood, lower the temperature of the skin, render it pale, and at the same time diminish perspiration and nervous action; while rage, and other violent passions, by augmenting the afflux of blood, elevate the temperature of the skin, and give rise to the red flush so characteristic of excitement.

Facts like these establish a connexion between the brain and the nervous system and the skin, which is of

great importance in discovering the causes of disease, and the means of preserving health ; but the limits of this chapter prevent my pursuing this part of the subject any further.

One more remark, however, on the structure of the skin, is necessary to the full understanding of the means proper to be employed for preserving it in health. In addition to the parts already noticed, there are numerous small follicles contained in its substance, and opening by orifices at the external surface of the skin, which are filled with an oily matter ; this easily concretes and becomes visible, in the shape of dust or scales on the skin, and roughness on the hairs of the body. This oily matter is necessary to preserve the skin from being penetrated and relaxed in its fibre by water ; but it is also necessary that it should be removed as fast as it has done its office, and not suffered to accumulate on the skin or clothing. These follicles exist in all parts of the body, except the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, but they are most abundant where hairs are implanted. It is this oil which renders the tresses of some ladies so soft and shining. In some persons it is so redundant on the hair as to require careful removal ; in others it is only sufficient to keep it in good order ; whilst a deficiency is the cause of that coarse, rough look which prevents some heads from ever appearing well-dressed and smooth.

From this sketch of the nature and uses of the skin, slight and imperfect as it is, you cannot fail to perceive that much of your comfort depends upon its being preserved in a healthy state, and that one indispensable condition of its health is perfect cleanliness. When we consider the great extent of surface presented by the human body, and the large quantity of matter which it excretes, some of which passes off in the form of vapour, whilst other parts are deposited on the skin, we shall

see the importance of thorough and oft-repeated ablutions. Once at least, in twenty-four hours, the whole surface of the body should be washed in soap and water, and receive the friction of a coarse towel, or flesh-brush. This may be done by warm or cold bathing; by a plunging or shower-bath; and even without further accommodation than an ordinary washing bason and sponge. By washing a small part of the person at a time, rubbing it well, and then covering up what is done, the whole may be washed in cold water, even in winter time, and a glow may be produced after it, in a young and healthy person.

Some persons avoid the use of soap as pernicious to the skin; but good white soap, in moderate quantity, and with soft water, can never do any harm to a healthy skin; and there is no surer way to preserve the complexion from pimples, and roughness, and blotches, than by keeping the whole surface of the body free from the deposits daily made upon it by the insensible perspiration. This may be done by washing in *cold* water with soap every day, and a *warm bath* once a week. Warm bathing is highly useful to the health, and if properly indulged in, has no debilitating effect. Dr. Combe says, "When it is not too warm, and not prolonged beyond fifteen or twenty minutes, the tepid bath may be used daily, with perfect safety and advantage, by persons in health."

It is common for persons who are in the habit of sponging themselves over with cold water every morning, or of taking the shower or plunging bath, to omit it when they have a slight cold, or sore throat, or a touch of rheumatism; whereas, if it were properly done, so as to produce a glow all over the skin, their habitual ablutions would be the best remedy for those beginnings of evil. Since checked perspiration produces such ailments, whatever tends to open the pores and to

increase the action of the skin, will be likely to remove them. If, however, cold water does not produce a healthy glow, the use of it may be prejudicial, and in such case it will be better to use the warm bath, in order to make the skin do its office freely. But to cease your customary bathing at such times, is to increase all your difficulties.

After this explanation of the nature and uses of the skin, you will more readily understand why, in the chapter on Nursing-the Sick, so much is said about cleanliness and ventilation, and in the chapter on Dress, so much stress is laid upon not wearing anything next the skin that will not wash.

When persons boast how few minutes they require to make their morning toilet, they little think what an unfavourable inference may be drawn from it with regard to their cleanliness. It is not possible for persons to wash themselves thoroughly, and attend properly to their hair, teeth, and nails, and put on the simplest dress, in less than half an hour; and most women will need an hour. There is no merit in making a short and hasty toilet in the morning. An hour is not too much to devote to it; but if you have to dress a second and third time in the course of the day the less time you give to this the better. Those who spend an hour on their persons in the morning, can dress for a ball in half, or a quarter, of that time; whereas those who take but ten minutes to dress before breakfast, often waste two or three hours over the evening toilet, doing then, as an extra affair, what ought to be done, as a matter of course, every day.

When the skin is in a healthy state, there is an agreeable sensation of warmth throughout the surface of the body; and, in order to preserve it in this state, we must add to perfect cleanliness and daily friction sufficient and suitable clothing. All the organs of the

body have a mutual dependence on each other; and the connexion between the skin and the lungs is so intimate, that, whenever there is a deficient circulation and vitality in the skin, the blood retires from the surface, and becomes too abundant in the lungs, and other organs are overtasked, causing irritation, and laying the foundation of incurable diseases. When, therefore, you are habitually troubled with cold feet and hands, or an abiding sense of chilliness, you should attend to it as a warning of nature, not to be neglected with impunity. Either the skin requires bathing and friction, or your clothing is insufficient, or you need muscular exertion to raise the temperature of your body.

If my limits would allow of my entering as fully into the subject of the uses of the muscles as I have done with regard to the skin, you would see the immense importance of exercise to promote the health of your body and the vigour of your mind. If I could acquaint you with the curious arrangement and distribution of the nerves throughout the body, and show how directly they are affected by the motions of the muscles in which they are imbedded, you would know why a walk taken on compulsion, along a dusty road or crowded street, without any agreeable aim, does you less good than exercise combined with pleasure.

As girls pass from childhood to womanhood, they are apt to lose their relish for bodily exercise; and the sedentary habits acquired at school are often continued when they *could* find time and opportunity for exercise, if they knew how essential it is to life and health.

In hopes of adding something to the convictions of the young on this subject, I will briefly describe the grand process of the circulation of the blood, which is going on every moment within us, with a rapidity and precision almost beyond the belief of the unlearned. Will it not surprise you to be told, that the blood in your little finger is changed four thousand five hundred

times in every hour? Can you believe that a quantity of blood, equal to the whole amount contained in the body, passes twice through the heart every three minutes? Yet these are well ascertained facts.

That little heart whose pulsations never attract your attention, except when accidentally quickened, is carrying on, all unperceived by us, this rapid and extensive circulation, on the regularity of which depend health and life. At each beat it sends forward two ounces of blood, and there are about seventy-five pulsations in a minute; it is easy, therefore, to see that thirty or thirty-five pounds, which is the amount of blood in a common-sized adult, may pass through the heart twice in about three minutes; that is, once on each side, as it passes to and from the lungs. But the process of circulation must be explained a little further in order to understand this.

Every part of the body derives its nourishment from the blood; the same portion of blood answers its purpose but a single moment; it must be immediately replaced by a fresh portion, or the organs will want the requisite energy to carry them forward in their tasks; a rapid circulation is therefore necessary to supply this food of life. The blood is carried all over the body by innumerable little vessels called arteries, and on its way certain portions of it are expended in the production of various necessary secretions, such as perspiration, saliva, bile, the wax in the ear, &c.; also in promoting the growth of the young, and supplying materials for the growth of particular parts, such as the hair and nails. All the evacuations of the body are maintained at the expense of a certain amount of blood. This waste in the blood is supplied by the food we take.

After passing once through the body, the blood is so changed and deteriorated as to be unfit for further use; it is therefore returned to the heart by a separate set of

vessels called veins, and poured in at the right side. Just before this *venous* blood reaches the heart, the fresh supply of matter called *chyle*, and formed from the food we eat, is forced into it. The heart then sends this mixture of new and old blood into the lungs, where it is exposed to the action of the air we breathe, and undergoes a chemical change, which again fits the whole mass for circulation. It then returns to the left side of the heart, fit for distribution through the arteries to every part of the body. “ Thus the heart carries on two sets of circulations by separate systems of vessels, the one from the left side of the heart to every part of the body and back to the right side, and the other from the right side to the lungs and back to the left; the former having for its object the nutrition of every part and the maintenance of life; and the latter the restoration of the deteriorated blood and the change of chyle into blood.

“ As the food cannot become a part of the living animal, or the venous blood regain its lost properties, until they have undergone a change produced by the air in the lungs, the action of breathing, by which this change is effected, is one of pre-eminent importance; and grievous indeed is the ignorance and folly which, for the sake of a fancied beauty of form, lead a young girl so to compress her waist as to prevent the free play of the parts necessary to perfect respiration; or, for the sake of fashionable amusements, to fill the lungs with vitiated air, which is not fit to revivify the blood, sent there to meet a fresh and pure atmosphere.

“ The *quantity* and *quality* of the blood have a most direct and material influence upon the condition of every part of the body. If the *quantity* sent to the arm, for example, be diminished by tying the artery through which it is conveyed, the arm, being then imperfectly nourished, wastes away. In like manner, when the *quality* of that fluid is impaired by deficiency

of food, bad digestion, impure air, or imperfect change of the blood in the lungs, the whole body becomes more or less disordered. Thus, in consumption, death takes place chiefly in consequence of respiration not being sufficiently perfect to admit of the formation of proper blood in the lungs. It has been said that the pressure occasioned by corsets and tight belts has so diminished the powers of young females to inhale air, that the quantity taken in at one respiration is only about half what young men of the same age are capable of; and we all know how many more women than men die of consumption. As we were intended by our Creator for a life of activity, all the functions of the body are contrived to fit us for this object; and they never go on well for any length of time unless there is a regular exercise of all our organs. It is accordingly curious to observe the admirable manner in which each is linked in its action and sympathies with the rest. The principal blood-vessels in all parts of the body lie imbedded among muscles for both the protection and aid which the latter afford them. Every contraction of the muscles compresses the diameter of the vessels, and as the blood in them cannot go back, it is propelled in the arteries from the heart *towards* the extremities, and in the veins *from* the extreme parts to the heart: this quickens the circulation of the blood, and enables the parts to which it is sent to act with greater energy and effect, and the augmented action is attended by correspondent waste and exhalation. To replenish the blood thus exhausted of its nutritive parts, a greater quantity of food is required; and to prompt us to attend to this condition, the appetite becomes keener, and the powers of digestion proportionally vigorous. The food taken is more speedily converted into chyle, and added to the great current of blood pouring into the heart on its way to the lungs; that this mixed current may be there more speedily animalized, respiration becomes deeper

and more frequent, thus admitting a larger quantity of air and freer circulation through them than before; and the blood thus renewed and re-endowed with the principle of life, imparts new vigour and fresh nutriment to all the organs of the body, and fits them for that active exertion which the proper discharge of all the duties of life requires from every member of the human race.

“ We may now see the use of that hurried breathing and quicker palpitation of the heart, which we are apt to complain of as evils, when we climb a hill, or run up many steps, or make any unusual muscular exertion. Without the increased action of the heart and lungs, the blood would not be sufficient, or of the proper quality, to support the muscular action.

“ Seeing, therefore, how the whole economy of our bodies is calculated for constant muscular exertion, we may judge better of the evil consequences likely to ensue from a deficiency of such exercise. The circulation, from want of stimulus, becomes languid, especially in the vessels of the extremities (producing cold hands and feet); this feebleness of action occasions little waste of materials, the appetite and digestion consequently become weak, respiration heavy and imperfect, and the blood in such a bad state, that, when distributed through the body, it cannot give the requisite stimulus for healthy, vigorous action, and disease shows itself in some of those forms common to persons of sedentary habits*.”

Among those who are convinced of the importance of exercise, some consider the time which it requires a serious objection to it; but if such would narrowly observe their own feelings, they would find that the increased vigour obtained by exercise more than compensated for the loss of time, by enabling them to ac-

* COMBE, *Principles of Physiology*.

compish more in what is left. Others think that they can do without regular exercise in the open air, because for a time they can neglect it with impunity ; but let such persons study the structure of their own bodies, only so far as it is explained in these pages, and they must see that nature will not be cheated of her rights. When some accidental cause of indisposition arises, there will, in such subjects, be a general feebleness of body sufficient to convert it into serious disease. Many a cold, which would be thrown off easily by a person in the daily habit of *walking* and *bathing*, becomes the source of consumption and early death, where the patient has led a sedentary life, and neglected to preserve the skin in an active and healthy state.

Dr. Combe says, that “ to render exercise as beneficial as possible, it ought always to be taken in the open air, and to be of a nature to occupy the mind as well as the body. Social play and active sports are infinitely preferable to regular and unmeaning walks, and tend in a much higher degree to develope and strengthen the bodily frame, and to secure a straight spine, and an erect, firm, easy, and graceful carriage. A formal walk is odious and useless to many girls, who would be delighted as well as benefited by spending two or three hours a day in spirited exercise.”

There are some games which might be played in the open air by grown-up young ladies with great propriety, if arrangements were made for the purpose ; and it is to be hoped that the time will come when every gentleman’s seat in the country will be furnished with the means of out-door exercise for ladies, such as bowls, with small and light balls to suit their little hands, quoits, bows and arrows for archery, &c. Battledore, the graces, and skipping-rope, are also very useful, as, by bringing the arms into play, they exercise the lungs. If, instead of sitting a whole morning over your books and work, you would jump up at the

end of every hour or two and play the graces, or skip the rope, for five or ten minutes, it would greatly help to keep your circulation brisk and healthy, and with daily walks might prove sufficient exercise.

Riding on horseback is a very beneficial mode of exercising; and, where the lungs are weak, it is much better than walking, as it does not hurry the breathing. Besides this, it calls into play a greater number of muscles, and is very exhilarating to the spirits. Rowing a light boat with small oars is excellent sport and exercise too for the young and healthy, where there is a safe and retired piece of water; but, unfortunately, the cases are rare in which a young lady can with propriety indulge in this healthful exercise.

Walking is, after all, the kind of exercise most easily practised, and the easiest mode of preserving health. It agrees with almost everybody, and, if combined with some daily exercise of the muscles of the arms and chest, and some agreeable object, will answer the purpose very well. Those who live in cities and large villages can generally unite some pleasant visit or some necessary business with their daily walks; and the sense of accomplishing some little affair that was on the mind, as a thing to be done, adds much to the pleasure, and consequently to the benefit, of a walk. In the country, the study of mineralogy or botany will add an interest to your walks that will render them highly salubrious, and beguile you into spending many more hours in the open air than you would otherwise do. Your walking-dress should be such as will allow free play of the arms.

All exercise, to be useful, should be habitual; and after it has been, from any cause, interrupted for a time, the return to active habits should be gradual. Great evils have ensued from a disregard to this rule. When the fine weather of spring bursts upon young persons who have led a sedentary life during the win-

ter, and been confined a great deal in warm rooms, it tempts them to take long walks and rides on horseback, to which they are wholly unfitted by their previous habits ; and not a season passes in which health is not more or less impaired by this injudicious treatment of the body.

All changes in diet and clothing, also, ought to be gradual. Some persons are made ill by the fresh fruits and vegetables of spring, only because they partake too largely of them at first ; some believe that walking or riding does not agree with them, because, when indulged in rashly and without previous training, it has caused them serious indisposition. But there are few persons who, by beginning with walking half a mile out and back again, and adding a quarter of a mile every day, could not in a fortnight walk six or eight miles without inconvenience. Any who will fairly try this gradual increase of exercise, will be astonished at the power it developes.

The time at which exercise is taken is another point of great importance. Persons in perfect health may venture to take it at any time, except after a hearty meal ; but how few there are who can flatter themselves that they belong to that class. All who do not had better take their walks in the forenoon, about two hours after breakfast, and before there is any exhaustion felt from want of the next meal. It requires considerable vigour to walk with advantage before breakfast ; and those who wish to inure themselves to it should begin very gradually, and not let their first experiment be some very long excursion on May morning. Your daily walk should not be so prolonged or delayed as to bring you home tired just before dinner. When you are tired, your stomach will be so too, and your food will oppress you. And when you are not fatigued by your exercise, it is better to allow an hour to repose before eating. This rule is observed with

respect to horses ; they are never allowed to eat immediately after work : and shall we take less care of our own health than of theirs ?

Exercise immediately after a full meal is equally to be avoided, and for the same reason, namely, muscular action causes an afflux of blood and nervous energy to the surface of the body, and withdraws it from the stomach : if, therefore, you eat directly after walking, you tax the stomach when it is not prepared for action ; time should be allowed for a change in the distribution of the vital powers to take place ; when also you walk after a full meal, you withdraw those powers from the stomach, and leave it unfit for the process of digestion. Where circumstances oblige you to exercise directly after a meal, you should make it a light one. It is on this account that abstemiousness is so necessary to travellers. Invalids travel much more comfortably on a low diet than on a full one, when obliged to keep continually in motion.

Some persons think to economize time by going out for a walk at the close of day, when they can no longer see to employ themselves in-doors ; but this is a great mistake ; the air is less salubrious, and you lose the beneficial stimulus from solar light ; besides which you have had less vigour of mind and body all day for not taking your exercise early.

If walking does not produce a general glow, and warm your hands and feet, it fails in a great measure of its intended effect, and the cause of this failure should be carefully sought. It may be that you do not wear sufficiently warm clothing, or your skin may not be in a healthy condition, or your corset may be so tight as to impede your breathing deep inspirations ; your arm-holes may be so small as to prevent the free motion of the arms, and your shoes may cramp your feet ; in all which cases you can hardly escape cold extremities. But if you suffer this inconvenience when

warmly clad, with all your clothes comfortably loose, walking fast and breathing freely, you had better try some stronger exercise, such as dancing or riding on horseback. Never be satisfied with your plan of life, until you are capable of a daily glow to your fingers' ends from moderate exercise. No one can be perfectly well whose feet and hands are habitually cold. Months may elapse without your finding out that anything ails you; but the day of reckoning will come at last, and you will pay the forfeit due to nature for breaking her laws.

In very cold weather, it is well to accumulate a little heat by sitting a few minutes in a warm room with your shawl or cloak on, before going out; but on returning from your walk, in a fine glow, it is better not to enter a warm room until you have taken off your extra clothing.

Exercise of the arms is particularly useful to the lungs, and may be taken daily to great advantage, in the way of house-work. But the lungs ought to be directly exercised also by means of the voice. Reading aloud in a clear tone, with proper emphasis and cadence, requires the varied activity of most of the muscles of the trunk, to a degree of which few are conscious till their attention is turned to it.

The fatigue of reading aloud and reciting is much lessened by learning to manage the voice properly, and by never exhausting the lungs, but taking breath frequently. Singing, too, when indulged in moderately and regularly, is likely to strengthen rather than injure healthy lungs; where there are symptoms of disease in that organ, the use of the voice should be regulated by your medical adviser. Laughter is a very useful exercise for the lungs, and may be freely indulged, in proper place and time.

Having taken a brief survey of the uses of the skin, the heart, and the lungs, it now remains to notice the

stomach and its office of digestion, on which depends that supply of nutriment which is to make up for the perpetual waste that is going on in every part of the system.

To reasoning man is given the dangerous privilege of choosing his food, unaided by those instincts which direct the lower orders of animals; and in this, as in other things, he has often abused his freedom, and made his ingenuity an instrument of destruction. In the progress of society, from the life of the savage hunter to that of the pampered *gourmand*, cookery has become a very complicated process, and the science of gastronomy has been pursued till it has changed the natural and wholesome uses of things to that which is most unnatural and noxious; it has destroyed the health of thousands, and caused it to be said, that "men dig their graves with their teeth." It is to be hoped that a still further advance in civilization will correct these evils, and that the science of cookery will become the means of our finding, on every table, the most wholesome as well as palatable dishes. The circumstance of a learned physician and philosopher having written a book on cookery* is a favourable indication; his work is intended to correct many prevalent errors, and is with so much spirit and humour, particularly the Preface and Introduction, as to be highly amusing as well as instructive.

All sorts of comparisons have been instituted, to illustrate the nature and uses of the stomach; some have likened it to a grist-mill, others to a stew-pan; it has been called a fermenting vat, and a laboratory. But the stomach is like none of those things; it is a most curious and delicate organ, carrying on a hidden process of mechanical, chemical, and living means, and "so susceptible of impressions made upon it by sub-

* "*The Cook's Oracle*," by DR. KITCHINER.

stances that are put into it, that it seems more like a nervous expansion from the brain, than a mere receptacle for food." To make a proper use of this delicate organ, and derive the full benefit of what we eat, we must have our meals at regular intervals, they must be composed of light and nourishing materials, three-fourths vegetables, and these must be cooked in the best manner, and eaten slowly; every mouthful must be well chewed before it is swallowed; no liquid must be taken till we have nearly done eating, and then in a very small quantity, such as half the contents of a common-sized tumbler, or, in warm weather, somewhat more. After each meal we should remain quiet for a while, and nothing should be eaten between meals.

Now, in order to understand the reason why these rules are necessary to the preservation of health, I must explain what is known of the process of digestion.

There is formed in the stomach a liquid, called *gastric juice*, which has a solvent power, and acts upon the food in such a manner as to convert it into a pulp called *chyme*, and give it new properties, which fit it to be applied to the purposes of nutrition. But, in order to prepare the food for being thus operated upon, it must be triturated by the teeth, and mixed with saliva, which is made to flow freely into the mouth by the act of chewing; when this is neglected, tasks are imposed upon the stomach which do not belong properly to it, and which often delay and derange its functions. Besides this chemical and life-giving change, produced by the gastric juice, there is a mechanical action going on in the stomach, by which the food is arranged in a particular manner; that which is first prepared is lifted up and pushed out of the orifice at the top of the stomach, into what are called the smaller intestines, where it is mixed with fluids, poured out upon it by two neighbouring organs, the liver and pancreas. Soon after its mingling with these, a separation takes place

between that part which is capable of nourishing the body, and that which is not. The former, under the name of *chyle*, is absorbed by certain vessels called *lacteals*, which collect and transfer the chyle into a common trunk, by which it is carried up to the top of the chest, and poured into the vein which passes near the left shoulder and enters the heart on the left side, as already described; there the chyle mingles with the blood, on its return from the extremities, and becomes animalized with it, by a passage through the air-vessels of the lungs. The residue of the chyme, which is not nutritious, remains in the canal, is carried downward, changes its character, and is at length discharged from the body.

As the average time required for the digesting of a moderate meal is four hours, and it takes two more for it to pass the smaller intestines and be ready for absorption, it is necessary that there should be an interval of six hours at least between our meals, in order that the stomach may be emptied and rested, before its powers are again called into use. Eating in the intervals between regular meals disturbs and delays the process of digestion; and, in weak stomachs, it will stop it altogether. Whenever, therefore, your food oppresses you, and you have a long and laboured digestion, you should omit the next meal, and so give the stomach time to recover itself. It is an old maxim, that the sick and feeble should eat little and often; "this maxim," says a distinguished physician, "has killed more than the sword." This may be too strongly stated; but all medical men agree, that eating at too short intervals is one of the most fruitful sources of disease, and should be especially avoided by those in feeble health.

Nothing can be more contrary to common sense than the practice of swallowing large draughts at the beginning of a meal.

Persons who do not chew their food properly, and thereby obtain saliva enough to moisten the mouthful, are very much given to drinking frequently at dinner. But it makes the greatest difference to the stomach, whether the food comes into it reduced to a pulp, and properly mixed with saliva, or whether it comes unbroken, and wet with some foreign liquid. In the first case, the gastric juice takes hold of it readily; in the latter, it is forced into a task not intended for it by its Creator.

To begin with drinking is at once to dilute the gastric juice, and render it less fit to take hold of the solid food. To drink copiously, either before or after eating, makes the contents of the stomach too moist, and the business of digestion is necessarily delayed till all the superfluous liquid is removed from the stomach; and thus a double task is imposed upon that organ.

Eating too fast is another cause of indigestion. It operates in two ways: first, by sending the food down imperfectly chewed; and secondly, by causing us to eat more than we really want.

The sensation of hunger is produced by the presence of gastric juice in the stomach without anything to operate upon; it is appeased by giving that solvent fluid something to do; but, as it requires a little time for it to take hold of the food, if you hurry down the whole contents of your plate in ten minutes, you may take more than enough to satisfy the natural appetite, and so overload your stomach before you are aware of it; whereas, by eating very slowly, chewing your food well, and pausing between whiles, you give the gastric juice time to act upon the food already swallowed, and can better judge when you have taken enough.

People often complain of the rules given by physicians as too strict, too artificial, and think the natural appetite may be safely taken as a guide. And so it might, if your food was always of the most wholesome

kind, and cooked in the plainest manner ; if you confined yourself to one kind of meat, and one of vegetables, for your dinner, and to plain bread for the other meals ; provided too, that you ate very slowly, and at sufficiently long intervals for your stomach to be entirely emptied and rested, before you tasked it afresh.

It is the artificial manner in which food is prepared, tempting the palate to overload the stomach, that makes so many rules necessary, and so much self-command requisite. Every luxurious table is a scene of temptation, which it requires fixed principles and an enlightened mind to withstand. One would suppose that the mistresses of families and their cooks were in league to destroy the health of those for whom they provide. First comes the plainer kinds of food, as meat and vegetables at dinner, and bread and toast at other meals ; with the former are given certain condiments, in the way of sauces, mustard, pepper, &c., in order to tempt you beyond your appetite for simple flavours ; then follows a succession of more delicate viands, such as pies, custards, tarts, jellies, and all the tempting dishes used in second courses, with perhaps a dessert, with dried fruits, which are the hardest of all to digest. At the tea-table, cakes are followed by sweet cakes of various flavours, and these are pressed upon you by the mistress of the feast, as if she thought your well-being depended upon your eating of every delicacy on her table ; whereas, a true regard for your good would prevent her urging these things upon you, even though custom might oblige her to provide them.

Nothing can be more seducing to the appetite, than this arrangement of the viands which compose a feast ; as the stomach is filled, and the natural desire for food subsides, the palate is tickled by more delicate and relishing dishes, till it is betrayed into excess ; the stomach is overloaded, digestion goes on laboriously,

and the whole system sympathizes in the hard task. Heaviness of mind, langour of body, headaches, feverish and restless nights, generally follow such deviations from the laws of our being ; and, when frequently repeated, they produce the long catalogue of diseases which are so prevalent among luxurious persons. It would be better for the health, if this order were reversed, and we partook of the dainties first ; the stomach would deal better with them when empty, and we should be in far less danger of eating too much, if the plainest food were served last. The most approved mode of treating children now is, to give them their piece of cake first, and then to let them satisfy their appetites with bread ; and the same arrangement would be equally salutary for those of a larger growth.

Happy is it for those whose childhood has been guided by enlightened parents, and who then formed a habit of simple living. Happy they, who are used to drink nothing stronger than water with their dinner, and that in very moderate quantities ; who have a fixed habit of dining on one dish of meat, and one or two of vegetables ; whose stomachs are never filled with trash between meals ; and who can deny their palates what they know to be unfit for the stomach. As they grow older and wiser, they will appreciate such a bringing up ; but it is to be feared, that, in this day of unlimited indulgence, there are comparatively few who have to thank their parents for any such habits.

For those, then, who have grown up without any such aid from others, it is extremely important that they should learn to understand the laws which govern their bodies, and form rules for themselves which shall enable them to preserve their health from injury, amid all those petty temptations, which become formidable from their frequent recurrence, and which are perpetually pressed upon them by the example and pre-

cept of those who, though themselves suffering from similar indulgence, are wholly unaware of the cause.

Many young persons drink water at various times through the day, particularly in the summer season; and would think it very unreasonable in any one to wish them to abstain from it. Yet the best judges will tell you it is altogether superfluous, and really injurious. The habit is generally formed at school, and, once formed, appears like a necessity of nature, and persons go through life slaves to this superfluous want.

Thirst is a dryness in the throat, occasioned by the secretions there not being so abundant as usual, and this would be more surely corrected by a little warm liquid, sipped slowly, or by chewing a piece of hard biscuit, than by pouring down cold water, which, if it relieves you for a moment, increases the feeling of dryness afterwards, and rather hinders than promotes the sensation which would effectually remove the thirst. I have it under the hand of one of the first physicians of our day, that "man is one of those animals which require very little drink. His ordinary food contains nearly liquid enough to supply the necessities of his system, whilst the function of digestion is impeded and interrupted by copious draughts, either at or between meals." Even a little drink, taken frequently, has the same disturbing influence that a little food has, taken out of season, and should be avoided as an idle and pernicious habit. The labouring man, who perspires profusely, may be allowed to drink more freely; but ladies, who undergo no hard toil, or exposure to a hot sun, are better without those frequent draughts.

Some delicate girls are oppressed by the third meal in the day, who get over the first two very well; and they vary their solid food, to ascertain what it is that disagrees with them; when if they would only omit their second cup of tea, all would be well with them.

The too common practice of visiting confectioners'

shops in the morning-walk, and eating there a variety of sweet-meats and pastry, has ruined the health of thousands. If ever you are tempted to such an indiscretion, let your luncheon of sweets serve you instead of a dinner, and eat no more that day, till your stomach is entirely emptied of those contents which are so difficult of digestion.

A person whose general health is good, can cure any slight derangement of the stomach by total abstinence; and it is much better to refrain from food than to take medicine. The habit of dosing yourself with soda and peppermint, when you have eaten imprudently; or with bitters, to procure an appetite; or Rochelle powders to assist the bowels, is all bad for the health, very bad. A well-regulated diet and proper exercise will prevent the necessity of any of these nostrums; and when an excess has been accidentally committed, omit the next meal, and that will generally cure you.

It seems almost superfluous, in these days of temperance, to say any thing to the softer sex against the use of ardent spirits and fermented liquors; but, as the subject of preserving the health would be incomplete without it, and as the delicate frames of women have their peculiar temptations, I cannot dismiss the topic of diet without saying that it is the opinion of the wisest and best physicians, that all young persons are better without any stimulating liquors, and that it is a great mistake to resort to them, as a cure for those nervous and debilitating diseases which have their origin in sedentary habits, hot rooms, tight lacing, late hours, improper diet, want of bathing, &c. The temporary relief, gained by a glass of wine, or cordial, is dearly paid for, by increased debility after the first effect passes off; and the most refined and intellectual women are not safe, if they pursue this course, from becoming a burden to themselves, and the shame of all connected with them. It is therefore best to form a

habit of drinking no fermented liquors, unless recommended by a physician, and to take no tonics, unless so prescribed.

Having said so much about the stomach, I fear you may suppose, that I wish you to be continually watching its functions, and thinking after every meal how you are digesting it; but nothing can be farther from my intention. In order to judge rightly, we must know a great many facts. Some of these I have here presented to you, in order that you may draw your own conclusions, and lay down general rules for the government of your appetite. When you have made your plan and formed your habits on enlightened principles, I would have you dismiss all thoughts of your stomach and its functions from your mind, and never think of it again, till some accidental disturbance obliges you to do so, and then your rule of abstinence will come to your aid.

No one can make rules for another as to the articles of diet which will agree with her. To the healthy, all things naturally eaten are wholesome, if taken at proper times, and in proper quantities; those who are oppressed by their food, must find out for themselves what agrees best with them and what causes disturbance. When once you have ascertained clearly that a certain kind of food disagrees with you, avoid it resolutely; for there is no more despicable folly, than that of indulging your palate at the expense of your health. Do not even suffer your politeness to betray you into an indiscretion of this sort; but let your reasonable self-denial be proof against the unreasonable importunity of those who show their hospitality by making war upon the health of their friends.

I cannot dismiss this part of my subject, without a few observations on the importance of a daily evacuation of the bowels. The practice of taking medicine to effect this should be avoided; but no pains should

be spared in regulating the diet and exercise, so as to obtain it. If all mothers made a point of establishing regular habits in childhood, it would not be necessary to notice the subject here ; but, knowing how carelessly most young persons treat the subject, and that some even consider it a piece of refinement and a privilege not to pay daily attention to this function of the body, I feel it incumbent upon me to point out the evil consequences of such a course.

It may startle some who thus neglect themselves, to know that they carry in their face the proof of their bad habits ; and that a medical man has said, he could distinguish, in a large company, all those girls who were inattentive to their health in this particular. He says he knows them by the state of their complexions, and he longs to remonstrate with them on the impolicy, if not the sin, of so maltreating their systems and spoiling their good looks. To those who have right views of the subject, there is something the very reverse of refinement in such conduct ; and young ladies would certainly avoid it, if they were aware of all the consequences. Besides the indirect injury to the health, and consequently to the beauty, of all, it has a direct effect unfavourable to the complexion ; it also makes the breath offensive, and sometimes affects the whole atmosphere of a person ; it is, moreover, a frequent cause of eruptions of the skin. If this be not already your mortifying experience, let me persuade you to comply with the laws of your being, before you find it is too late, before you have felt the chastening which will sooner or later follow their infringement.

A great deal has been said and written, by medical men, against the unhealthy practice of tight lacing ; but, it is to be feared, with very little effect. So long as gentlemen admire small waists, and praise those figures the most which approach the nearest to the shape of a wasp, or an hour-glass, it is in vain to tell

young ladies that the practice is destructive of health, and that there is no real beauty in the small dimensions at which they are aiming. The taste of the lords of creation must be rectified, and then the evil will correct itself. Let medical men, let painters and sculptors, teach young men that all such unnatural compression of the body is deformity; let Grecian models of beauty be studied, till the shape of a modern belle shall no longer command admiration. Let mothers, too, make a stand against this general perversion of the uses of the body; let them insist upon regulating the size and shape of their daughters' corsets, until they have attained their full developement of figure, and then it would be impossible for half the mischief to be done that now is; for, by beginning whilst the bones are soft and pliable, the lower ribs can be compressed into half their natural dimensions.

I have been assured by a girl, shaped like an hour-glass, that she did not lace tight; and have been called to witness that she was of the same size without, as with, her corset. The case is plain,—nature has been completely overruled, early tight lacing has produced a permanent deformity, and the space in which the lungs play has been reduced for ever to those narrow bounds.

Few girls are aware of the force they employ when they lace their corsets; the mode of doing it deceives them; it is so easy to gain inch by inch of that treacherous silken cord, that they are not conscious of the effect they are producing; whereas, if they were obliged to fasten their corsets by buttoning them in front, they would soon find out how tight they are. Let me beg my young friends to mistrust themselves on this subject, and to refrain from tightening their laces even as much as they can with ease.

Another fruitful source of pain and distortion is wearing tight shoes. A celebrated surgeon of the present day has said, that it is the rarest thing to find

a foot the bones of which have not been injured by this practice. He says, the foot is constructed on the principle of a double arch, one lengthwise and the other crosswise; when the foot is raised, the ends of the arches contract; when it is on the ground, and the weight of the body rests upon it, they expand, and the arches become nearly flat; and unless there is, in the shoe, ample room for this expansion, some part of the delicate structure must be injured. The frequent complaints we hear of inflammation and pain in the joints, are occasioned by shoes made too tight to allow this necessary play of the foot; all the misery of corns is produced in the same way; and much of the bad walking we see is referrible to the same cause. Now this practice is doubly foolish, because it not only produces much bodily suffering, but it misses the object for which that severe penalty is incurred. However pretty we may think little feet, there is no beauty in a large one crammed into a shoe too small for it. The moment a shoe looks stuffed, and the instep seems to be running over it, the size of the foot is more apparent than it would be in a larger shoe; the aim of the wearer is defeated, and the torture is borne in vain. Shoes that are too narrow, make the foot look like something rolled up and stuffed into them; they destroy all form and comeliness, and render the step tottering, as if the soles of the feet were round instead of flat. Young ladies think everything of size, and nothing of form, in dressing their feet; but this a great mistake. If a person has a large foot, it may be well shaped, and will look better in a shoe that contains it comfortably, than when pressed out of all shape, and showing that it is crowded into one too small for it. What so disfigures a foot, as a large toe-joint growing out? And yet this deformity is constantly produced by wearing shoes too short. When disease and distortion have been induced by tight shoes, the beauty of a foot is

gone ; and the bad style of walking, occasioned by suffering, continues long after the wearer has been obliged to abandon the practice of cramping her feet.

Now, if, in addition to all these reasons against wearing tight shoes, a more correct taste prevailed as to the dimensions of feet, we might hope to see the practice abandoned. Our predilections in this particular savour a little of the barbarism of the Chinese. The masters of Grecian art did not so regard the subject ; their models of beauty prove that free scope was allowed to the foot, and that its perfection depended on its shape and proportion to the rest of the figure, and not on its absolute smallness. The foot of the Venus de Medicis is much larger than any modern belle would approve ; it is about double the width of the sole of a French slipper ; and distorted indeed would be any statue modelled after the proportions allowed to the feet by the fair ladies of the present day.

CHAPTER VIII.

BEHAVIOUR TO PARENTS AND THEIR FRIENDS.

IRREVERENCE COMMON.—BEAUTY OF REVERENCE.—SYMPATHY WITH PARENTS.—TREATMENT OF ELDERLY FRIENDS.—ANECDOTE.

HAVING premised that I write this little volume for those who have been *morally* and *religiously* brought up, it will be thought needless here to insist on the grave duties which belong to the filial relation ; it may be said that exhortations to these are learned in the Bible, conned in the spelling-book, set forth in every work addressed to youth, and heard so frequently from the pulpit and the elbow-chair, that no one can err from want of knowledge.

Whence comes it, then, that there is so little demonstration of respect, in the manners of many of the rising generation, toward the authors of their being? What can the state of *feeling* be, when the language to a parent is such as would be scarcely tolerable if addressed to a young companion? Is it compatible with filial reverence, flatly to contradict a father, to laugh at a mother's ways, to reply to a grave question jocosely, without giving the information required, to interrupt parents in the midst of speaking, to oppose their opinions in a tone of self-confidence, implying that your judgment is quite as good as theirs, or to leave the room whilst they are still addressing you? Yet all these things are sometimes done by girls, who, if questioned on the state of their feelings towards their father or mother, would say they loved and respected them, and would not do anything to give them pain.

The present state of manners is more favourable to a confidential intercourse between children and parents than was the starched demeanour of our forefathers; but there might be a much greater infusion of respect, without any diminution of confidence. Filial love, indeed, can never exist in perfection unless it be founded on a deep sentiment of reverence; and where that has not been well cultivated in childhood, it is soon frittered entirely away, by habitual indulgence in the disrespect, flippancy, and rude familiarity already noticed.

The sentiment of reverence is one of the noblest attributes of the human mind; to its exercise God has affixed an exquisite sense of enjoyment; it operates, in a thousand ways, to elevate and embellish the character. Its first developement is in the feelings of a child for its parents, and this is the natural preparation of the mind for its rise to a higher object, even to the Father in heaven. As the understanding ripens, and this sentiment is cultivated, it embraces all that is great and good among men, all that is vast and magnificent in nature and in art; shedding over the character of its possessor an indescribable grace, softening the very tones of the voice, and rendering it impossible for the manners to be wanting in deference and courtesy towards parents, or teachers, or the aged of any description.

Where the sentiment of reverence is deficient, a foundation is wanting for many graceful superstructures; and the defect shows itself in various ways, of which the irreverent are little aware, or they would endeavour to supply the deficiency, as a mere matter of taste, if not of principle. Such persons will have unpleasant manners which no rules of good breeding will correct: and as the irreverent state of feeling grows by indulgence in disrespectful demeanour, they are in danger of becoming bold, reckless, and even impious.

You whom I address are yet young ; whatever may have been your education, you are yet young enough to re-educate yourselves ; you have hearts capable of being touched by the beautiful, the true, the sublime ; you feel reverence for God and the things that belong to religion ; but you have not perhaps considered how the same sentiment is connected with other relations in life. In all the great moral authors whom you have read, you have found filial piety, and reverence for the aged, treated as indispensable qualities in a virtuous character, whether heathen or Christian ; but you may never have reflected on the indications which you give of the want of it in your own. If then your conscience tells you that you are guilty of those faults of manner which I have described, you may be sure that your feelings of reverence need quickening and cultivating ; and if you would escape becoming the harsh, ungraceful character which grows out of such impropriety, you must reform your manners.

It is to be feared that some young ladies think themselves excused from the duty of filial reverence, because they are more highly educated than their parents ; they have more knowledge, more refinement, and therefore they may dictate, contradict, and set up their judgments in opposition to their fathers' and mothers'. But this is a great mistake ; no superiority of culture can change the relation of child and parent, or annul the duties that grow out of it. The better your education has been, the more cause for gratitude to those who have procured for you this blessing ; the higher the culture, the more you are bound to perform well all the duties of life ; the greater your refinement, the more perfect should be your manners towards your parent ; the more your influence is needed in the family, the more important it is that you should not impair it, by such faults as the uneducated can judge of, as well as the most cultivated. There is besides a great meanness in

turning against your parents the weapons which their kindness has put in your hands. The acquirements of their children often make parents feel their own deficiencies very painfully ; and nothing but the most respectful behaviour on the part of the offspring can lessen the mortification, and convince them that, apart from all such adventitious circumstances, they have undeniable claims to the love and reverence of their children.

Nothing can justify the want of respect in the manners of children to parents, of pupils to teachers, of the young to the aged ; not even faults of character in the individuals claiming such deference and regard. It is due to yourself to treat the relation with respect, and the more perfectly proper your manners are, the greater will be your influence.

There is nothing in the whole circle of domestic relations so lovely, so pure, so honourable to both parties, as the respectful, affectionate, and confidential intercourse of some young women with their parents.

So much of safety and happiness is gained by being open and confidential with the natural guardians of your youth, that it is worth while to make some sacrifices to it of momentary repugnance and fastidiousness of taste.

A young lady of my acquaintance kept her parents ignorant of a marriage-engagement she had entered into, because she was afraid her mother would shock her refinement by talking to her about being *courted* ; and I fear there are many concealments made from mothers for no better reason.

Parents are generally more ready to sympathize with their daughters than their young hearts imagine. The shrinking timidity which accompanies youthful feeling, often renders you unnecessarily afraid to open your minds to them ; but let the effort once be made, and

however it may be received, you will find yourself relieved from all the additional perplexity which belongs to concealment, sustained by the sense of well-doing. The degree of confidence, however, which subsists, must depend upon the characters of the individuals; and where it is not very great, you may be justified in not communicating such matrimonial overtures as you are resolved to reject; but I cannot imagine a case in which you are not bound to inform your parents of such offers as you incline to accept, and to consult them before you engage yourselves.

It may not always be in your power to prevent your feelings being known before you seek their advice; but it should be an avowed principle of your life, that you will never marry without the consent of your parents, nor merely to please them.

The sympathy you will so often need from affectionate parents, you must abundantly repay, or you will become selfish and exacting. If you would be the friend and companion of your father, as every daughter should endeavour to be, you must enter into his feelings and views, you must take an interest in his concerns, introduce into conversation such subjects as you know to be most agreeable to him, read or listen to the passing occurrences of the day, and learn of him the principles on which the ordinary business of life is conducted, and of which women are generally too ignorant.

With your mother you are called upon to sympathize most tenderly, in all the daily cares and perplexities of life; and when her self-sacrificing spirit would fain save you from partaking in her anxieties, and strives to preserve your young spirit free from care, let it not be so. You will be all the better for sharing her labours, and relieving her of some of her cares, and when you have done your utmost, great are the burdens that still

must rest on the mother of a large family ; let your feelings, therefore, be ever on the alert, to sympathize where you cannot relieve. Let her over-tasked frame and exhausted spirit revive, if possible, under the soothing influence of a daughter's watchful sympathy and cheerful co-operation ; for there are no such unpitied martyrs as the mothers of large families, who perform faithfully their duties, and are worn out in the service. Daughters may do something to delay the sacrifice, and it justly behoves them to see that they do not hasten it by their careless self-indulgence, by inattention to their mother's feelings, and to the true state of her case.

Daughters are apt to think that their mothers lay too great stress upon trifles, and perhaps they do ; but this you cannot prevent ; and since that is important to them, which appears a trifle to you, is it not better to please them in it, than to add the weight of a feather to their over-burdened minds ? Nothing should be considered a trifle which adds to a mother's cares.

If your heart and your manners are right towards your parents, you will behave with proper respect and consideration towards their guests, paying them those little attentions which become your age and theirs, never appearing impatient of their presence, but deriving all the good you can from their experience of life. However uninteresting some of your mother's guests may be to you, never sit apart and read in their presence, as that is a breach of good manners, but occupy yourself with your needle, and be ready to wait upon them as occasion arises.

If you have brothers or sisters, or young companions, in the same room, be very careful that your conversation does not interrupt that of your elders ; speak in an under tone, and do not indulge in laughter, as that is disrespectful to your mother's guests, and might be

mistaken for laughing at them, which would be the grossest rudeness. If they join in your youthful talk, do not become silent, or in any way give the impression that they have spoiled your conversation; but, even if that should be the case, receive their advances politely, and be assured you will gain more by this self-government, than you can lose by the interruption of the most agreeable conversation.

If you happen to be in your mother's sitting-room when a visiter enters, who is a stranger to you, rise to receive her, as if you were the mistress of the house. Place a chair for her, and enter into conversation with her, till your mother appears, when you may quietly withdraw, unless she so introduces you, as to indicate her wish that you should stay and make the acquaintance.

In meeting your elderly friends in the street, look at them so as to give them an opportunity of recognizing you; if they do so, return the salutation respectfully, not with the familiar nod that you would give to one of your own age. Never remain sitting, whilst your elder is standing before you and talking to you, for that would be a great mark of disrespect and ill manners. Never lounge on a sofa, whilst there are those in the room whose years give them a better claim to that sort of indulgence.

There is something so graceful and appropriate in the deference which youth pays to age, that if it were not a Christian duty, it should be insisted upon as a matter of good taste. I asked a gentleman once, if he did not think Miss C—— very pretty and ladylike;—"I used to think so," was his reply, "but I saw her treat an old gentleman rudely, and she has never looked pretty to me since." I often think of this, when I see young girls just coming out into society pushing themselves before their elders, elbowing their

way to the supper-table before wives and matrons, accepting the attentions of elderly gentlemen as if they were conferring, instead of receiving favours, and treating those whose age and station entitle them to marked respect from young people, with as much careless familiarity as they would their own schoolmates.

CHAPTER IX.

CONDUCT TO TEACHERS.

HOW TO RECEIVE A MASTER.—THE CLAIMS OF FEMALE
TEACHERS.—UNCERTAINTY OF RICHES.

THE more enlightened we become, and the more we are disencumbered of false notions of gentility, the more will those be honoured, and the better will they be paid, who make a business of teaching.

When a master comes to give you a lesson, receive him as your particular guest, with a serious, polite, and deferential manner, readily entering into conversation with him, till he chooses to begin the lesson. Then devote your whole attention to the business in hand, remembering that the labour of teaching the best scholar is irksome enough, and that you must reward your masters by your progress, no less than by your money. The greatest delicacy is required in consulting the interests of a teacher without hurting his feelings; but you should never forget that time is money to him, and if you keep him waiting, let the loss be yours, not his, and never overrun the allotted hour, to make it up.

A scrupulous attention to politeness is not only useful to prevent hurting the feelings of others, but it is the best shield to your own delicacy. As there are all sorts of masters, as well as the refined and dignified (and some are young and indiscreet), it is best to maintain a strict reserve, never talking of your private concerns, never speaking freely of persons, never indulging in jokes and laughter, because that leads to unpleasant familiarity. Serious politeness is the best shield a young lady can have, and a shield you may

need in a *tête-à-tête* with a youthful instructor ; this sort of defence protects you, without offending others.

When the office of teacher is filled by one of your own sex, all your kindest sympathies should be enlisted in her favour, and you should endeavour, by every means in your power, to render her task agreeable, and to sustain her in that position in society to which her manners and acquirements entitle her. Nothing can be meaner than the false pride exhibited by some girls towards the ladies who give them lessons in music, drawing, or languages. Some have even been known to pass their instructress in the street, without acknowledging the acquaintance ; and she, whose cultivation and refinement may far exceed that of her pupils, is considered by them of inferior rank, because she has added to her other merits that of rendering herself independent by the exercise of her talents. Now all this is wrong, entirely wrong.

If wealth is to be the standard of gentility or importance, where fortunes are often acquired by persons without education or refinement, and where the fluctuating nature of property often deprives those who have been well brought up of the means of living, we may expect to see the grossest manners prevail, and civilization decline. But, much as riches are valued, there is an instinctive homage paid to mental culture and refined manners, beyond what wealth can command ; and those who pass a female teacher without a friendly recognition, would yet hesitate to acknowledge that they did so because she had fewer pounds at her disposal than they had. They probably avoid all scrutiny of their motives, and try to make themselves believe there is a propriety in so doing, which cannot be easily explained. They are right there,—it cannot be explained on any principle of justice or sound reason. If a female teacher of unblemished reputation has a refined and cultivated mind ; if she

has good manners, and the habits of society which belong to the circle in which she teaches; what should hinder her being received into it on a footing of perfect equality? Certainly not the simple circumstance of her turning her talents to account, in a community of shopkeepers and merchants, lawyers and doctors, bankers and manufacturers. Why should the lady who makes her living by imparting to others one of her accomplishments, be less regarded than the man who gains his livelihood by selling goods or manufacturing them? and can there be any sense in the half-educated daughter of a lawyer or merchant treating her more mature and more accomplished teacher as an inferior?

If policy, if propriety, if Christianity fail to give you the right tone of feeling towards your teachers, let the reflection, that the gayest and richest among you is continually liable to such a reverse of fortune as may place her in the very condition of life which she now contemns. The uncertainty of riches has been the theme of the moralist in every age; and it is no uncommon occurrence for young women, who have been brought up in easy circumstances, to find themselves, on their father's decease, obliged to provide for themselves. One of the best arguments, therefore, in favour of learning certain accomplishments is, that they may, on a change of fortune, furnish the means of obtaining an honest livelihood.

CHAPTER X.

THE RELATION OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

INFLUENCE OF SISTERS ON BROTHERS.—CONFIDENCE WON AND KEPT.—HAPPY EVENINGS AT HOME.—MUTUAL AID IN CHOOSING FRIENDS.—FRATERNAL LOVE A SAFE-GUARD.—LITTLE ANNOYANCES BETWEEN SISTERS.—POLITENESS IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE.—DUTIES OF ELDER SISTERS TO THE YOUNGER CHILDREN.—WORKS ON EDUCATION RECOMMENDED.

THE important relation which sisters bear to brothers cannot be fully appreciated, without a greater knowledge of the world, and its temptations to young men, than girls in their teens can be supposed to possess. I beg you, therefore, to profit by my experience in this matter, and to believe me when I assure you that your companionship and influence may be powerful agents in preserving your brothers from dissipation, in saving them from dangerous intimacies, and maintaining in their minds a high standard of female excellence.

If your brothers are younger than you, encourage them to be perfectly confidential with you; win their friendship by your sympathy in all their concerns, and let them see that their interests and their pleasures are liberally provided for in the family arrangements. Never disclose their little secrets, however unimportant they seem to you; never pain them by an ill-timed joke, never repress their feelings by ridicule; but be their tenderest friend, and then you may become their ablest adviser. If separated from them by the course of school or college education, make a point of keeping up your intimacy by full, free, and affectionate correspondence; and when they return to the paternal roof, at that awkward age between youth and manhood,

when reserve creeps over the mind like an impenetrable veil, suffer it not to interpose between you and your brothers. Cultivate their friendship and intimacy with all the address and tenderness you possess ; for it is of unspeakable importance to them that their sisters should be their confidential friends. Consider the loss of a ball or party, for the sake of making the evening pass pleasantly to your brothers at home, as a small sacrifice,—one you should unhesitatingly make. If they go into company with you, see that they are introduced to the most desirable acquaintances, and show them that you are interested in their acquitting themselves well.

If you are so happy as to have elder brothers, you should be equally assiduous in cultivating their friendship, though the advances must of course be differently made. As they have long been accustomed to treat you as a child, you may meet with some repulses when you aspire to become a companion and friend ; but do not be discouraged by this. The earlier maturity of girls will soon render you their equal in sentiment, if not in knowledge, and your ready sympathy will soon convince them of it. They will be agreeably surprised when they find their former plaything and messenger become their quick-sighted and intelligent companion, understanding at a glance what is passing in their hearts ; and love and confidence on your part will soon be repaid in kind. Young men often feel the want of a confidential friend of the softer sex, to sympathize with them in their little affairs of sentiment, and happy are those who find one in a sister.

Once possessed of an elder brother's confidence, spare no pains to preserve it ; convince him, by the little sacrifices of personal convenience and pleasure which you are willing to make for him, that when you do oppose his wishes, it is on principle, and for conscience' sake ; then you will be a blessing to him, and, even when

differing from you, he will love and respect you the more for your adherence to a high standard.

So many temptations beset young men, of which young women know nothing, that it is of the utmost importance that your brothers' evenings should be happily passed at home, that their friends should be your friends, that their engagements should be the same as yours, and that various innocent amusements should be provided for them in the family circle. Music is an accomplishment chiefly valuable as a home enjoyment, as rallying round the piano the various members of a family, and harmonizing their hearts as well as voices, particularly in devotional strains. I know no more agreeable and interesting spectacle, than that of brothers and sisters playing and singing together those elevated compositions in music and poetry which gratify the taste and purify the heart, whilst their fond parents sit delighted by. I have seen and heard an elder sister thus leading the family choir, who was the soul of harmony to the whole household, and whose life was a perfect example of those virtues which I am here endeavouring to inculcate. Let no one say, in reading this chapter, that too much is here required of sisters—that no one can be expected to lead such a self-sacrificing life; for the sainted one to whom I refer was all that I would ask any sister to be, and a happier person never lived. "To do good, and make others happy," was her rule of life, and in this she found the art of making herself so.

Sisters should be always willing to walk, ride, visit with their brothers, and esteem it a privilege to be their companions. It is worth while to learn innocent games for the sake of furnishing brothers with amusement, and making home the most agreeable place to them.

If your brothers take an interest in your personal appearance and dress, you should encourage the feeling by consulting their taste, and sacrificing any little fancy of your own to a decided dislike of theirs. Brothers will

generally be found strongly opposed to the slightest indecorum in sisters; even those who look with indifference upon freedom of manners in other girls, have very strict notions with regard to their own sisters. Their intercourse with all sorts of men enables them to judge of the construction put upon certain actions, and modes of dress and speech, much better than women can; and you will do well to take their advice on all such points.

Brothers and sisters may greatly aid each other in judging of their friends of the opposite sex. Brothers can throw important light upon the character and merits of young men, because they see them when acting out their natures before their comrades, and relieved from the restraints of the drawing-room; and you can in return greatly assist your brothers in coming to wise and just conclusions concerning their female friends. Your brothers may be very much indebted to the quicker penetration of women into each other's characters, and saved by your discernment from being fascinated by qualities that are not of sterling value; but, in order to have the influence necessary to such important ends, you must be habitually free from a spirit of detraction, candid in all your judgments, and ever ready to admire whatever is lovely and good in your own sex. If, when you dissent from your brother's too favourable opinion of a lady, he can with any justice charge you with a prejudice against her family, or a capricious dislike of her, your judgment, however correct, will have no weight, and he will be very likely to become not only the lady's champion, but her lover.

If your brothers have received a classical education and are studiously inclined, you may derive great assistance from them in the cultivation of your mind, and bind them still closer to you in the delightful companionship of literary pursuits.

I have been told by men who had passed unharmed

through the temptations of youth, that they owed their escape from many dangers to the intimate companionship of affectionate and pure-minded sisters. They have been saved from a hazardous meeting with idle company by some home engagement, of which their sisters were the charm; they have refrained from mixing with the impure, because they would not bring home thoughts and feelings which they could not share with those trusting and loving friends; they have adhered to habits of temperance, because they would not profane with their fumes the holy kiss with which they were accustomed to bid their sisters good night.

The duties of sisters to each other are so obvious and well understood, that it will be needless to enter fully upon them here. If your heart is right towards God, and you feel that the great business of life is the education of your immortal spirits for eternity, you will easily bear with the infirmities of others, because you will be fully impressed with a sense of your own; and, when you can amicably bear and forbear, love will come in, to soften every asperity, heal every little wound, and make a band of sisters "helpers of each other's joy."

A few cases may arise, in the most harmonious families, wherein sisters may not fully understand each other's rights, and may therefore ignorantly trespass upon them. Such, for instance, as where one of the family is very fond of reading, and wishes to have a certain portion of her time uninterruptedly given to that employment, and a sister keeps interrupting her by conversation, or appeals to her for aid in some lesson or piece of work. Sometimes a great reader is made the butt of the rest of the family for that very valuable propensity, and half her pleasure in it destroyed by its being made a standing joke among her brothers and sisters.

Sisters should as scrupulously regard each other's rights of property as they would those of a guest staying in the house; never helping themselves without leave to the working materials, writing implements, drawing apparatus, books, or clothing of each other. It is a mistake to suppose that the nearness of the relationship makes it allowable; the more intimate our connexion with any one, the more necessary it is to guard ourselves against taking unwarrantable liberties. For the very reason that you are obliged to be so much together, you should take care to do nothing disagreeable to each other.

Love is a plant of delicate growth, and, though it sometimes springs up spontaneously, it will never flourish long and well without careful culture; and when I see how it is treated in some families, the wonder is, not that it does not spread so as to overshadow the whole circle, but that any sprig of it should survive the rude treatment it meets with.

Genuine politeness is a great fosterer of family love; it allays accidental irritation, by preventing harsh retorts and rude contradictions; it softens the boisterous, stimulates the indolent, suppresses selfishness, and, by forming a habit of consideration for others, harmonizes the whole. Politeness begets politeness, and brothers may easily be won by it to leave off the rude ways they bring home from school or college. Never receive any little attention without thanking them for it, never ask a favour of them but in cautious terms, never reply to their questions in monosyllables, and they will soon be ashamed to do such things themselves. You should labour, by precept and example, to convince them that no one can have really good manners abroad, who is not habitually polite at home.

Elder sisters exert a very great influence over the young children of a family, either for good or for evil. If you are impatient, unfair in your judgments, or

assume too much authority, you injure the tempers of these little ones, make them jealous of their rights, and render your own position a very unpleasant one ; whereas, if you are patient and kind, and found your pretensions to dictate, not on your age, but on truth and justice, the younger children will readily allow your claims.

Young children are excellent judges of the motives and feelings of those who attempt to control them ; and, if you would win their love, and dispose them to comply with your reasonable requests, you must treat them with perfect candour and uprightness. Never attempt to cheat, even the youngest, into a compliance with your wishes ; for, though you succeed at the time, you lessen your influence, by the loss of confidence which follows detection.

With every disposition to treat the younger ones kindly, elder sisters are often discouraged and discomforted by what they consider the over-indulgence of their parents towards the younger members of the family ; but where this complaint is well founded, much is still in their power. They can, by judicious conduct, do a great deal to counteract the bad effects of this parental fondness, and make the little ones ashamed to take a mean advantage of it. The very indulgent are seldom just ; now children value justice and strict adherence to promises more than indulgence, and you may mould them to your will by the exercise of those higher qualities.

It is the duty of elder sisters to take a lively interest in the education of the younger children, and to use all the advantages which they have received for the benefit of those that are coming forward in the same line. They should aid their parents in the choice of schools, and ascertain what is actually learnt at them. Where circumstances render it necessary that the elder children should assist in teaching the younger ones, it should be

done cheerfully ; not as a duty merely, but as a useful discipline. Some writers upon education consider teaching others as the best and most effectual way of learning one's self. When Madame de Genlis described what she considered as a perfect system of education, she represented her models as taking younger children to teach as a part of their own instruction. It has been said, that we are never sure that we know a thing thoroughly, until we have taught it to another.

If the duty of teaching has its advantages, it has also its dangers ; it is a very fatiguing occupation, and ought not to occupy too much of a young person's time. Where this is required of a daughter, other home-duties should be remitted, and her day should be so apportioned as to leave her ample time for exercise and recreation, or the labour may prove injurious to her health. It is very seldom that one who has never attempted to teach others, can duly appreciate the labour of it, and a father, so circumstanced, will sometimes think that as many hours may be given to it as he gives to his business. This, however, is a great mistake ; nothing is so heavy a tax on mind and body as the act of communicating knowledge to other minds ; and the more intelligently and lovingly it is done, the greater is the fatigue.

This duty should not be allowed to interfere with the further progress of the young teacher ; for though it may be useful to go over old ground with those who are learning, she should still be careful not to narrow her mind down to the standard of their habits ; but refresh and invigorate it, at the same time, by exploring new fields of literature.

Those who are not called upon to teach younger brothers and sisters, may yet do them great good by exercising their minds in conversation, and by communicating useful information in their daily intercourse. The reverse of this I have sometimes observed with sorrow. I have seen amiable and well-informed girls

act towards these little ones as if they were not at all responsible for the impressions they made on their tender minds. They would mislead a young inquirer by false information, and consider it a good joke ; or they would harrow up young and susceptible minds by frightful stories, which, though amusing at the time, could not fail to send the little dears trembling to bed, afraid of the dark, and unable to sleep for terror. Where, however, the elder children have been properly trained by the parents, such mistakes cannot occur, and where they have not, it would require a volume to do justice to the subject.

It is as necessary for those who are much with children to have right notions about the manner of treating them, as for parents themselves ; it is therefore very desirable that elder sisters should read some of the excellent works which have been written on education. By studying the subject of education, elder sisters would learn to regard the children around them, not merely as necessary interruptions and occasional play-things, but as moral and intellectual problems, which they may find profit in solving.

CHAPTER XI.

TREATMENT OF SERVANTS AND WORKWOMEN.

HOW TO MAKE THE SERVICE OF DOMESTICS DESIRABLE.—
 ANECDOTE.—BLAME.—PRAISE.—POLITENESS.—ASKING
 FAVOURS.—MORAL IMPROVEMENT OF DOMESTICS.—CARE
 OF THOSE WHO WORK BY THE DAY.

THE service of private families should be rendered desirable, not by extravagant wages, but by justice and kindness, and a liberal consideration of the comforts of those who do the work of our houses. Let us attach them to us by kindness and sympathy; if we make them feel that we take an interest in their happiness and welfare, they will more cheerfully consult our interest and convenience, and we shall have willing labour, instead of reluctant eye-service.

Much of the fault-finding that is heard about domestics arises from a spirit of domination; and ladies often talk as if they were living in olden times, and had a right to govern with absolute sway those whom they hire. They talk of their domestic servants as if the obligations were all on one side, and as if, in consideration of the wages paid, the hired persons were to lose all free agency; to perform the same round of duties, month after month, without relief or variety; to seek no relaxation; to gain no further knowledge; but be content to drudge on thus to the end of their days.

The lesson of justice which housekeepers are so slow to learn from the teachings of religion, is brought home to them by necessity. Those who have long maintained the strict discipline of their grandmothers, find, that unless they relax a little, they cannot keep good servants about them for any length of time; and though they grumble, and discourse much of the degeneracy

of the times, they are obliged to let their domestics do many things in their own way, and have their occasional relaxations and amusements.

There are persons, however, who find no difficulty in being well served; yet it is not because they give extravagant wages, or allow their domestics unwarrantable liberties; that is not the way. It is by following that simple rule, given by our Saviour to his disciples, and which is of universal application, though many do not seem to see its bearing upon this particular social relation; it is by “doing unto others as you would that they should do unto you.”

Where domestics are selfish and deceitful, they have frequently been rendered so by the exactions and the domineering spirit of those whom they have served; and it yet remains to be shown how much the characters of both may be improved, when the bond of Christian brotherhood shall be fully acknowledged and acted upon in this relation of life.

My young reader will perhaps exclaim, “All this about domestics is well enough for our parents, but what have we to do with it?” Much, very much, I assure you. It is very important to the happiness of all concerned, that the prevalent errors upon this topic should be corrected; and if you would not add to the number of complaining and care-worn mistresses of families, you must avoid their errors, and practise, in your father’s house, those virtues that will lighten the cares which may at some future time devolve upon yourself.

If the spirit of domination is hard to be borne with in the heads of families, it is ten times harder to put up with it in the younger members; and, without a thorough understanding of the rights and feelings of hired persons, young ladies will be apt to trespass upon them, without knowing that they do so. Numerous unreasonable requisitions are made from mere thought-

lessness, which are not the less irksome for that. It is your duty seriously to consider the nature of your demands upon the time and attention of others, and to appreciate their feelings by imagining what yours would be in their place. So far from indulging the idea, that their situation in life makes such a wide distinction between you, that you cannot sympathize with them, you should consider all your superior advantages of education as so many calls upon you to a more scrupulous fulfilment of your duties towards them; and the more enlightened you are, the more perfectly ought you to sympathize in their feelings.

It often happens that those who wait upon young ladies are many years their seniors, and have much more practical wisdom than those whom they serve. Imagine, then, how irksome it must be to them, to be called off from their work, many times a day, for some trifling want of yours. Perhaps what they are about is hindered or spoiled by these interruptions, and they are blamed for what they could not help. Your attendant may be very much tired, and your bell may call her up flights of stairs, and when she gets up, she may find that you have summoned her to do something for you, which you might just as well have done for yourself. Her judgment may be better than yours; she may know what you ought to do, better than you do yourself; still, as a servant, she is bound to attend you, although your requests may be frivolous and vexatious. But, if you were in her place, would you not be inclined to rebel? Suppose, however, that her patience and good-nature are equal to the occasion, and that you speak to her so pleasantly, that your wants, though trifling, are cheerfully supplied; having done what you wish, she hurries back to her more important labours below stairs. Now imagine her feelings, if your bell rings again in a few minutes, and up she is obliged to go for something you forgot to say

when she came up before. Can you wonder if her brow is clouded and her answer short? Yet such are the trials to which domestic servants are continually subject, for want of proper consideration on the part of the young members of a family.

Interruption at meals is another great annoyance to domestics, and ought to be avoided if possible. After waiting upon others through their meals, they ought to be allowed to eat their own in peace and quietness. But so far from this being always the case, they no sooner seat themselves at table, than ring, ring, goes the parlour bell, and they must leave the meat untasted on their plates, to do something which might just as well be done half an hour afterwards.

I have been in some families, where the comfort of those who eat in the kitchen is as scrupulously guarded as that of those who eat in the parlour, and no one is permitted to ring the bell till the domestics have had a quiet half hour for their meal. This privilege is of far more importance to those who have been running about all day, than it is to their employers; and yet you would think it a great hardship to be called away from table two or three times in the course of your dinner or tea. Think, then, of the comfort of those who serve you, and in this particular provide for it.

In accomplishing the work of a large family, much depends upon the order in which it is done. A task is rendered doubly burdensome by being done at an inconvenient time, and of that no one can judge so well as the person who does it. It is best, therefore, for your interests as well as theirs, that the servants should know beforehand what you wish done, and then they can make their arrangements, so as to do it in the best time.

When people find that their convenience is thus considered, they take more pleasure in their business, do it better, and are more willing to exert themselves

when a pressing emergency comes, in which their ease cannot be consulted.

The ringing of a bell is the most imperative command that can be given, and young persons should be very scrupulous about the manner of resorting to it. It is well to be in the habit of thinking twice, before you ring once, instead of ringing twice, as some do, before they think once; and when you must ring, do it gently, and think of every thing that you wish to say, that you may not have occasion to ring again soon.

A distinguished female writer, living with her mother in London, was asked by her whether the bell in her room was in order, as she liked to be sure it was so, in case of her being taken ill in the night. The daughter said she would try it, and see whether it was or no, but she could not tell then, for she had not rang it for years. Her room was so far from the kitchen, that she conscientiously forbore to call the servant girl up there by the bell; she always contrived to tell her, when in the parlour, all that she wanted her to do, and so saved her many weary steps.

Keeping your domestics up late at night, and expecting them to rise early too, is very unreasonable, and is often thoughtlessly done, when it adds nothing to your comfort, but proceeds merely from forgetfulness of theirs. When you are out late at night, you should so arrange matters at home, that only one person shall sit up for you, and she should be allowed to lie in bed as much later in the morning as will make up her necessary sleep. If one of your family sits up for you, do not keep a domestic up also, for the sake of her rendering you some petty service in undressing, which you can very well dispense with; for the sacrifice of rest to her is too great for any trifling accommodation it may be to you.

When, at home, you choose to sit up late, be very careful not to keep any one sitting in the kitchen to

wait your pleasure before she goes to bed. Those who work hard require more sleep than you do, and having to rise early and do their morning work before you come down stairs, they ought to be allowed to go to bed at a reasonable hour. Think, for a moment, how heavily the hours must pass with a person who is tired and sleepy, and who is sitting alone and unoccupied in the kitchen, waiting another's pleasure to go to bed.

Scolding has long been considered ungenteel, and is now, I believe, growing obsolete. Finding fault in a severe or pettish tone never does any good; it is the last way in the world to make any one sorry for an omission, mistake, or accident. When any delinquency must be noticed, it is better to begin by a gentle and kind inquiry, why it was so; that affords the person an opportunity of justifying herself, when right; and when in the wrong, she will be more likely to see and allow it, if she is questioned instead of blamed. If you feel your temper raised by anything that has occurred, never open your lips to a domestic till it has entirely subsided; for you may, in an unguarded moment, be betrayed into the use of expressions which you may afterwards feel cause to regret.

Politeness is as desirable in our intercourse with the inmates of the kitchen, as with those of the parlour; it promotes kind feelings on both sides, and checks unbecoming familiarity. Always thank the servants for what they do for you, and always ask rather than command their services.

Whilst you are slow to notice those little faults which affect only your own convenience, you ought to deal promptly and strenuously with anything which shows a defect of principle in those around you. Any disposition to falsify or backbite, any lightness of conduct or conversation, should be seriously reprehended. No gossiping should ever be listened to, nor should your

confidence in their kind feelings ever lead you to make indiscreet disclosures of your own affairs.

When you have unavoidably been so situated as to require much extra labour of those who attend upon you, always acknowledge it by some little present of money, if you know them to be saving of their wages ; or, by consulting with your mother, you can generally fix upon some articles of clothing which you can spare, and which will be useful to them.

Be very careful to pay them any little debt you may happen to owe them ; for, if you forget it, they may not like to remind you of it, though a few pence may be more to them than as many pounds to you. Never think them mercenary because they value money more than you do ; remember what a serious thing it is to have nothing but what you can earn with your own hands, and to be dependent in sickness upon your own scanty savings. You should encourage them to be economical, and to put every shilling they can spare into a Savings' Bank.

Some persons oblige their friends at the expense of their domestics, which is just as unfair as if you were to make a present of something that does not belong to you.

I have heard a young lady admire her friend's ruffled cape, saying she would like to have one, if she could get it plaited so beautifully, adding, "Whom do you get to do up yours so elegantly?" The wearer of the cape replied, "It is done by our parlour-maid ; she plaits exquisitely ; and if you would like to have one made like mine, I will get her to do it up for you." "O, you are very kind," rejoins the other, "I should like it of all things." Now, if the young lady had plaited her own ruffles, and chose to make a tender of her services to her friend, it would deserve the name of kindness ; but to offer the services of another, as if they were your own, is anything but kind or just. The

maid agreed with your mother to do the work of the family, but not that of her friends, and you have no right to require it of her. But perhaps you have treated her so well, and done her so many favours, that you are sure she has a disposition to do more for you than she is strictly bound to do. If this be the case, you may ask her whether she is willing to oblige you by doing up your friend's cape, but never claim it as a matter of right; and if she answers readily and cheerfully that she will do it, be sure to thank her for it, and to receive it as a favour, for that will be some reward to her for the time and pains it will cost her.

You cannot be too careful to keep in view the rights of others; there being a constant tendency, in our selfish natures, to think only of our own, it requires a perpetual watchfulness to avoid infringing on those of others. It is, indeed, so difficult to draw the line between them correctly, that it is much safer to ask than to command a service, and the habit of so wording your requirements alleviates the evils of service, and produces a more agreeable intercourse than the habit of command; and when you ask a favour, acknowledge it as such.

The moral and intellectual improvement of those who live with you ought to be provided for, and the advantages which you have received ought to contribute to their progress. Much valuable knowledge may be communicated by the young ladies of a family to those who serve them, both by conversation, and by the selection of proper books for them to read. The arrangements of the family on Sunday ought to be made with reference to their convenience and leisure; and you should never suffer your engagements to interfere with their attendance upon public worship. You, who have so many sources of knowledge open to you, can scarcely appreciate the value to them of those few of which they partake.

Most of what has been said concerning domestics, will apply with equal force to those that work for you by the day; but, as the latter class often consists of persons in reduced circumstances, greater delicacy is required in consulting their feelings so as not to wound them. If not convenient to admit them to your table, see, yourself, that they have their meals sent to them in good order; for there is often an unfriendly feeling on the part of the servants towards such persons, on account of their not choosing to eat in the kitchen.

If you have a right appreciation of the toilsome life these people live, you will never fail to pay them promptly and liberally, and to watch over their interests, not suffering them to over-task themselves on your account. You will endeavour, by every means in your power, to relieve the tedium of their lives, and to make a day spent in your service one of the few remembered with pleasure long afterwards. Let it be a red-letter day in their calendar.

I am aware that there is a large class of readers to whom the foregoing observations on the treatment of domestics will not fully apply. Persons living in the interior of the country, on farms or in villages, frequently take a share in the duties of their household, and will be under no temptation to commit many of the errors pointed out in this chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

FEMALE COMPANIONSHIP.

FRIENDSHIP.—THE TREACHEROUS FRIEND.—INTIMACY.—
 KEEPING SECRETS.—GOSSIP.—INTERMEDDLING.—TAK-
 ING SIDES.—QUARRELS.—CURIOSITY.—ANECDOTES.—
 JEALOUSY.—DISLIKE.—TENACIOUSNESS.—POLITENESS.
 —REFINEMENT.—FLATTERY.—SINS OF CONVERSATION.
 —LAUGHTER.—RESERVE.—BORROWING.—PRESENTS.—
 CORRESPONDENCE.—CARE OF BOOKS.—RASH JUDGMENTS.

THE instability of girlish friendship has become a by-word in society, in consequence of young persons having dignified with the name of friendship the transient partialities that grow out of accidental circumstances. There are, however, few youthful intimacies which deserve that sacred name, or which are sufficiently well founded to be worth preserving. Whilst the judgment is unripe, the affections will often be misplaced; the changes, too, which take place in the characters of girls, in the course of a few years, often destroy all ground of sympathy; and, in this case, it is better to drop the intimacy than to keep up any false professions and appearances. It is better to subject yourself to the charge of inconstancy, than to continue an unprofitable intercourse with a person whom you have ceased to esteem.

Let not your heart be seduced by the beauty, the blandishments, or the accomplishments of a young companion. Unless her principles are fixed, her aims are high, and she regards life as an education for eternity, unless you can sympathize with her in your serious moments, and talk with her of your immortal destiny, take her not to your bosom, give her not your confidence; for her counsel will not strengthen your high and holy resolves, and when you most need her

sympathy, she will fail you, and you will find yourself to be leaning on a broken reed. None but the upright in heart are capable of being true friends; and none are upright who do not make a conscience of all their ways, and learn wisdom by communion with the Father of spirits. Choose your friends from among these, and you will be saved many disappointments.

So much has been written on the subject of friendship, and so much advice has been given to young girls on the choice of friends, that it is useless to expatiate on it here. If you wish to read some excellent remarks upon it, I would refer you to Mrs. BARBAULD'S *Essay on Friendship*; and, though somewhat out of fashion, Mrs. CHAPONE'S *Letters* contain much valuable matter, and, with a few allowances for the different state of society in which they were written, may be profitably consulted by young ladies of the present day.

My purpose is to exhibit the defective intercourse between inexperienced young girls, who fall into intimacies which do not deserve the name of friendship, but which consume much time, and expose them to ill-natured observation and misconstruction.

As a specimen of what you may unconsciously subject yourself to, by unprofitable and uncongenial intimacies, I will here repeat a conversation from real life, just as it was told to me by one of the parties.

"A young lady making me a visit, we happened to speak of a pretty girl with whom I had observed that she passed a great deal of time, and whom she called her *intimate friend*. I began as follows: 'Is Miss —— at school this afternoon?' 'Oh no, she does not go to school.'—'She has a governess at home, I suppose?'—'No, she is considered old enough to study by herself. They call it study, but I don't know how much she really does study. Nobody hears her lessons but her brother, and I fancy he is as ignorant as herself. They are none of them *great geniuses*.'—'Tis singular

to let her go on so, at her age.'—'Oh, the reason for keeping her at home is, lest confinement should hurt her; you know her spine is diseased.'—'No, I did not.'—'What, when she is so crooked! Have you never observed how crooked she is? I thought everybody had observed that.'—'I never have; it would be a pity for her form to be spoiled, she is such a pretty girl.'—'Yes, most people call her pretty; but I think her features are too small, and I have often heard it remarked, that she has no expression at all. My mother says that she will not be pretty when she is grown up; she has so little mind; and her colour is quite coarse, when you come near enough to examine it.'"

"Ah, poor intimate friend!" thought I. The speaker was reported to be a very amiable girl, for she said all these bitter things in a soft tone and with a sweet smile. A discriminating listener would discover the black spot in her heart, in spite of her voice and smile; and when youth is passed, it will no longer escape anybody's notice, and she will be known for what she really is.

You can always judge better of a person's character by her manner of talking with others, than by what she addresses directly to you, and by what she says of others, than by what she says to them. A conversation like the above ought to put you on your guard against any intimacy with a girl capable of it.

The vivacity of youthful feelings is such, that it often hurries girls into intimacies which soon after prove uncongenial and burdensome. You mistake an accidental agreement for a real sympathy, one agreeable interview for an insight into the whole character; and thus, by judging too hastily, you judge wrong. Far be it from me to recommend a suspicious temper. I would rather see a young heart deceived again and again, than see it nourishing suspicion as a habit of the mind; but I would have you make it a rule never to pledge your-

self to any intimacy, until you have taken time to reconsider your first impressions, and to distinguish between the charm that really belongs to a new acquaintance, and that which was thrown over your first interview by accidental circumstances and associations.

Supposing, now, that your acquaintances are well chosen, and your intimate friends are worthy of your confidence ; what are the mistakes that you are most likely to commit in this relation ?

Inadvertently betraying the secrets of one friend to another is a cruel injury, and a fruitful source of difficulty. Do not suffer yourself to be easily bound to secrecy, for keeping a secret is a very troublesome and disagreeable thing ; but, when you are thus pledged, be scrupulously faithful. Many girls have a silly way of making a secret of something of no consequence whatever, and of telling it to each of their friends separately, and enjoining secrecy on each. When you have been taken in once in this way, it is your own fault if you allow it a second time.

Never encourage your young friends to tell their family secrets ; if they are indiscreet enough to wish to do it, you should repress their confidence. Never invite them, by direct or indirect questions, to tell you of the matrimonial overtures which they may have received ; respect their secrets, and love your friend the better for her reserve upon a point of such delicacy, and one in which the feelings of another are so deeply concerned. If you have been privy to any such affair, keep the secret strictly ; and let no impertinent questionings induce you to reveal it. Make it a rule to have nothing to do with any love-affair that is carried on without the knowledge and consent of parents. If you have inadvertently become a confidant of the beginning of any such affair, use all your influence to induce your friend to break it off, or to open her mind to her natural protectors ; if you cannot prevail upon

her to do this, refuse any further confidence on the subject, and warn her in the most friendly way of her danger. In some cases, you would do right to inform her friends yourself of such a clandestine affair, having previously given her notice that you intend to do it.

There is generally something wrong, where there is much secrecy in the affairs of the young. If your aims are high, and your life is one of useful and honourable action, if you love mental cultivation, and live much in the company of the great spirits of all ages, you will be lifted above the petty interests of gossiping girls; you will not care to know how much Miss Such-a-one gave for her new bonnet; nor that Mr. A—— thinks Miss B—— told something to his disadvantage which broke off his match; nor any of the thousand things as trifling as these, which are made the theme of so much whispering among young ladies.

One of the great uses of reading is, that it furnishes you with interesting and safe topics of conversation with your young friends. To live with books is to inhabit a region far above the din, and turmoil, and petty vexations, which unnecessarily engross the minds of some who pretend to cultivation; and you cannot turn your advantages of education to better account, than by inducing your female friends to read with you, and to exchange the frivolous gossip of the day for communion with the spirits of the mighty dead.

It is very difficult, and requires all “the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove,” to talk of people, without violating the laws of charity or of truth; it is therefore best to avoid it. By substituting books, and the vast variety of characters and opinions which they present, you give yourself and your companions ample scope for the expression of your thoughts and feelings, for the discussion of various questions, for sharpening each other’s wits by collision of sentiment, correcting the judgment by comparison and dis-

crimination, and strengthening the memory by repetition and quotation.

When you receive your young friends at your own house, you should consider yourself responsible for the direction which the conversation takes; and, if it is becoming uncharitable or unprofitable, you should feel bound to give it a better and safer impulse. The introduction of a beautiful annual, or portfolio of prints and drawings, will often answer the purpose; and the fashion of strewing centre tables with books of fine engravings has a moral use which makes it very valuable. I have seen the breath of scandal stopped, and an unpleasant topic changed, by the timely opening of one of these volumes. It must, of course, be done with expertness, and you must have something to say about the book, that will command the attention of the person whom you wish to divert from her own topic, or it will be only a rude interruption, and will not answer the desired end. When courteously and cleverly done, it is a lawful use of your office as hostess.

Intermeddling with the affairs of others is a sure way of getting into trouble. A real wish to do good may sometimes lead you into it; and therefore it is that you need to be warned of its dangers, by one old enough to have seen numerous instances in which this good intention has failed, or resulted in nothing but harm. It is well to bear always in mind, that you can never know the merits of any case by hearing an account of it from one of the parties only. Let that party be ever so honest and truth-telling, her statement must be coloured by her own peculiar views and feelings; and this colouring, unconsciously given, may cause you to take a very incorrect view of the affair, and to think that your interference may do a great deal of good, when, if you had heard the other side of the story, you would be convinced of the propriety of not intermeddling. When, however, you feel it to be your duty

to become a mediator, you must be sure to hear both sides before you make up your own judgment on the merits of either; and, in offering any mediation, be very careful to make yourself clearly understood, and be very cautious in reporting the words of others.

Avoid, if possible, taking sides in quarrels; do not think it necessary, because you are intimate with a person, to take part in all her differences with others. By keeping yourself aloof, you will be a more impartial judge of your friend's course than any partisan can be, and can better advise her what to do. Take especial care not to widen the breach by indiscreet repetition of what either says to the disadvantage of the other.

Beware lest you become a meddler, in the vain hope of being a peace-maker.

If you have felt a real esteem and liking for a person, do not let a trifling offence separate you; and, however strange her conduct may appear, do not judge it till you have given her an opportunity of explaining it to you. It often happens that two persons think very hardly of each other's conduct, when ten minutes' explanation would set it all right in the minds of both. When an intimacy is broken off, let the memory of former kindness keep your lips closed upon the subject; and let the faith pledged in days of confidence and love, be honourably maintained when these have passed away. No conduct on the part of a former friend can excuse your betraying her secrets or exposing her faults.

The indulgence of idle curiosity is a fault which equally torments its possessor and her friends. To desire vehemently to know things which do not at all concern you, and are not in themselves interesting, is a disease of the mind, to which some persons are more liable than others; it is also one which grows by indulgence, and ought therefore to be speedily checked. I know an instance in which a lady's happiness was

disturbed for years, by being unable to find out how one of her friends disposed of her cast-off clothes ; and another, in which the whole pleasure of a summer excursion was marred for one of the party, because there was a box among their baggage, the contents of which she could not find out.

It is inconceivable to me, how any one can care for such things ; but since some persons do, it is well to guard against the first symptoms of such a disorder, or it may overgrow the mind, as in the following instance.

Two old ladies lived in a small town on a great public road ; and having secured a residence directly opposite the only inn in the place, their chief employment and pleasure consisted in watching the arrival of travellers, and sending their only domestic over to the public-house, to ask where they came from, whither they were going, and what refreshment they had called for. Such idle curiosity as this argues a very weak and vacant mind ; but there are persons of considerable talent, and some cultivation and refinement, who are nevertheless inordinately curious to know things which do not in any way concern them. To these I would say, give not the least entertainment to such a propensity ; starve it, keep it down, till it is stifled. Fill up your time and your thoughts with pursuits worthy of a rational and immortal being, and there will be no room for impertinent and vagrant fancies.

Of another kind of curiosity, an old writer has said, “ As the first of all evils, as the source of calamity, as the beginning of pain, avoid, O daughter of Eve, the bewitching charm of curiosity. Seek not to know what is improper for thee ; thirst not after prohibited knowledge ; far happier is she who but knoweth a little, than she who is acquainted with too much.”

Never countenance, even by sitting in silence, any conversation that is meant to gratify the curiosity here

alluded to. If there are any points in natural history that you have a reasonable desire to be enlightened upon, go to your mother, and ask her in all soberness and simplicity to explain them to you; and if she has wisely considered these things, she will answer your inquiries with plainness and directness; and you will acquire the knowledge you desire, without any sacrifice of modesty.

Do not suppose that jealousy is a proof of love, as those say who wish to excuse it in themselves. It is a proof of a want of proper confidence either in yourself or your friends, and often produces the very coolness it fears. Jealousy is the offspring of a restless self-love, and should never be tolerated as an amiable weakness, or a proof of humility. Some girls are perpetually asking their young companions if they love them, and how much they love them, and if they are loved more than such and such persons, and think this solicitude a proof of an affectionate disposition; whereas it is in reality the sign of an overweening selfishness. I knew one case, where love was changed to indifference by this perpetual questioning the degree in which it was felt.

A true Christian humility makes us readily believe that we are loved as much as we deserve to be, and if we see others loved more, we are willing to admit that they may be more worthy of it. If we are accustomed to strict, impartial self-examination, we shall find so much evil in ourselves, as will excuse any want of love in those about us, and make us feel that we generally have more than we merit.

God, in his goodness, has so constituted us, that the generous feelings of our nature not only tend to good, but are a good in themselves, and produce their own reward; whilst the malevolent ones have an opposite nature and tendency. Thus love and admiration are agreeable sentiments; dislike and ill-will render their

possessors unhappy, and constitute their own punishment. If you feel dislike toward any of your companions, beware that it do not make you unjust; do not foster it, or express it unnecessarily to others; but learn this lesson from it, that others have a perfect right to dislike you, and that, too, without any very cogent reason, merely from distaste.

In the private journal of that elegant scholar and accomplished man, Sir James Mackintosh, lately published with his *Life*, may be found this beautiful and candid statement:

“—— has, I think, a distaste for me, which I believe to be natural to the family. I think the worse of nobody for such a feeling; indeed, I often feel a distaste for myself; I am sure I should not esteem my own character in another person. It is more likely that I should have disrespects or disagreeable qualities, than that —— should have an unreasonable antipathy.”

From how many heart-burnings and unhappy feelings would such a candour as this preserve us! If we fully settle it in our own minds, that people have a right to dislike us, we shall feel no disposition to resent it; and thus we shall be saved the pain of anger, and the sins to which it leads.

A readiness to take offence is a sign of a narrow mind, or a bad temper. The excuses which people make for noticing slight affronts will not stand a moment before the law of Christ, and are brought to nought even by the wisdom of this world; for testy and tenacious persons are always defeating their own ends. I have seen a lady, who would otherwise have appeared very dignified and respectable, become the laughing-stock of a whole company, by tenaciously insisting on her rights.

The various ceremonies observed in refined society are very useful in settling little points, on which there

might otherwise be much doubt and perplexity; but they should never be so strenuously insisted upon, as to make an accidental omission of them a ground of resentment, and an apology should always be accepted in their place.

Without being ceremonious, you may always be polite; and, as in the case of brothers and sisters, the greatest possible intimacy should never induce you to dispense with politeness. This does not require that you should tell a young friend who calls upon you at a very inconvenient time, that you are delighted to see her; but it requires that you should rise to receive her, and set a chair for her, and speak kindly of something that interests her; and when you have put her into a pleasant mood by your polite reception, you may, if necessary, tell her that you have an engagement which prevents your staying longer with her then, but you hope to see her again soon. There is a polished sincerity of manner, which it is very desirable to possess; and, so far from true politeness having anything in common with deceit, I have always observed that persons of the most polished manners could best speak the truth without giving offence. A French writer* on politeness says, "Instead of being artificial in order to please, it is sufficient to be good-natured; instead of being insincere, in order to flatter the weaknesses of others, it is sufficient to be indulgent."

If you would cultivate refinement of manners, you must never allow yourself to be rude or boisterous with your young companions. You may have all sorts of games, and play blindman's-buff with the little children, and yet never lose the command of yourself, so as to become hoydenish and unfeminine. Whenever snatching and slapping is going on, if, instead of joining and

* Duclos.

retaliating, you withdraw from the sport, it will soon cease. There is much truth in the Italian proverb,

“Giuoco di mano, giuoco di mano.”

Nor is such rude play of the hands all that should be avoided; there is a custom among young ladies of holding each other's hands, and fondling them before company, which had much better be dispensed with. All kissing and caressing of your female friends should be kept for your hours of privacy, and never be indulged in before gentlemen.

Be on your guard against girls who begin their acquaintance with you by getting you away by yourself, and there questioning you about the names of your beaux, and the number of your embroidered caps. Put an end to such ridiculous talk at once; you need not mince the matter; they will bear plain dealing, and they require it. Be equally careful with those who begin by flattering you. Let them see that your opinion of your own merits and defects is not in the least altered by anything that they can say; and make them feel that they are taking a liberty with you, which you do not like.

We should not encourage our best friends to repeat to us the flattering things that are said of us. The heart is so prone to take for true the over-estimate of others, and become puffed up with vanity, that we should sedulously guard it from all such temptations.

Young girls who have much personal attraction are often more injured by the flatteries of their own sex, than by those of the other. Some think it the height of generosity to tell a friend how much she is admired, and what such and such gentlemen have said of her; they estimate the kindness of this by the effort it costs them to do it, and the desire they have for similar praises; but, in so doing, they show very little regard

to the modesty or delicacy of the object of their mistaken kindness.

Who has not experienced the sad revolution of feeling which takes place, when, after an evening spent with an agreeable party of young friends, you begin to reflect on what has passed, and perceive that, in the hilarity of the moment, you have been betrayed into errors which your conscience condemns! This is a very painful experience; but you should welcome the suffering, since it proves that your conscience is not hardened by the allowed commission of such faults. The desire of entertaining induced you to exaggerate and embellish every story you told; it led you to ridicule those who are really worthy of respect; for the sake of saying something funny, or witty, you sacrificed truth, justice, and charity. The laugh is over, your companions are gone, and you are left alone with a wounded conscience; you repent, and resolve to do better in future; and yet, when the temptation recurs, you sin again. The most gifted in conversation are most liable to the commission of these errors; it is so delightful to be the life of the company, to have all hanging on your lips for entertainment, to make all eyes sparkle, and all hearts bound with merriment. There is, to be sure, great enjoyment in this; but if you have fine parts and a ready wit, exercise your powers in producing the same amount of gaiety by innocent means; and think how delightful it will be, when, after entertaining the company all the evening, you are left with an approving conscience.

A very common mode of amusement is that of turning people into ridicule, and this it requires very little sense or wit to do. It is the cheapest of all kinds of fun, and the meanest. Its effect upon those who indulge in it is to harden the heart, sear the conscience, and blunt the perception of moral beauty. The pleasure which its most unbridled exercise gives, is of

a far lower order than that which a quick perception of goodness and moral greatness affords, and the two are incompatible. The happiness of admiring is great and lasting, and can be enjoyed alone ; the pleasure of ridicule is transient, and requires an audience. The one trains the soul for future joys, the other incapacitates it for tasting them.

It will cost you something to refrain from the faults of conversation here mentioned ; but if you will make the effort, you will be abundantly repaid. You will seem to feel your soul grow within you ; though your powers may be cramped in one direction, they will put forth more abundantly in another ; and you will soon perceive, that, in avoiding exaggeration and ridicule, you have but got rid of rank weeds that interfered with the growth of more valuable plants.

When the love of ridicule leads girls to deride the beaux and lovers of their friends, they may inadvertently do much harm. For though ridicule is no test of character, and should never affect our estimation of any individual, the very girl who is most prone to indulge in it will be most liable to be misled by it ; and may, in consequence of its effect on her mind, look coldly on the very man who is most desirable as a match for her, and who would have succeeded in making himself acceptable, but for the distorted view she took of him through the ridicule of herself and her companions.

Some believe that ignorance is a legitimate subject of derision ; but there cannot be a greater mistake. Your superior education has done little to raise and ennoble your nature, if you have not perfect charity and consideration for those who know less than you do.

Very giddy girls will sometimes so far forget themselves as to ridicule personal defects ; they will speak like a stammerer, or listen like the deaf, or imitate the awkward movements of the near-sighted or the lame.

Nothing can be more inhuman. All personal defects should be held sacred ; and so far from indulging in mockery or laughter, they should not even be commented upon, or referred to, unnecessarily. No expression of disapprobation is too strong for you to use to your young companions, whenever they fall into this fault. It is not sufficient that you do not share in it ; you should express your utter abhorrence of the practice.

Few persons can bear to be laughed at ; it is a mode of attack which admits of no defence ; if you become the subject of it, and appear angry at the first laugh, it is sure to raise another at your expense, and so on. The best policy is to join in the laugh. The direst enmities have been occasioned by laughter. A striking instance of this is given by Miss Edgeworth, in her *Castle Rackrent*, when she describes the bride of Sir Kit, just arrived from England, and laughing at all the peculiarities of her husband's Irish residence, particularly at the name of a bog on his estate. This is the foundation of an enmity that caused her ladyship an imprisonment of seven years in her own house.

Another great painter of human nature, Sir Walter Scott, makes the mortal hatred of old Elspeth for Eveline Neville to have originated in her having, when a school-girl, laughed at, and made sport of, the northern dialect of the Scotch woman.

Whilst you strive to bear being laughed at yourself, be very careful how you inflict that pain on others. When a good-humoured laugh has involuntarily been indulged in, at the expense of one of the company, you should always try to say or do something directly after, which shall assure the person laughed at that she has lost no esteem or regard by being the object of your merriment.

A certain degree of reserve should be maintained,

even with your familiar acquaintance. Never suffer them to intrude on what ought to be private hours and occasions. This is a proper self-respect, and you will not be loved any the less for maintaining it; though you may be called queer and over-particular. If you make a point of never going, uninvited, into the sleeping-rooms of your young companions, you can keep your own sacred from intruders, and it is very desirable that you should do so; for, unless that retreat is respected, you must be ever at the mercy of idle visitors, who, having no value for their own time, will not mind wasting yours. If you keep your room to yourself, you can often save some precious hours, by sending word you are engaged. There must always be times when the entrance of your most intimate friend, unbidden, into your room, would be an unwelcome intrusion; and therefore it is best never to begin the custom with any one, and never to use the liberty, however kindly it may be urged upon you by another.

Much time is frittered away in receiving and paying unmeaning visits, in stepping to talk when you ought to be doing something useful, in doubting, and deliberating, and consulting, about some trifling purchase, and in aimless, useless talk. If you are free from these follies, some of your companions are not; and, unless you can say No, when importuned to fall in with them, you will waste more precious hours than you are at all aware of, and the end of the week will come before half its allotted tasks are accomplished. If you have a plan of life, to which you strictly adhere, your young friends will respect it; but if you let them seduce you from it once, they will of course repeat the attempt, their importunity will annoy you, and your occasional firmness will be called perverseness.

If, from any circumstance, you happen to be in debt with a friend, be very prompt and exact in repaying it.

Never imagine that carelessness about money-matters is a proof of generosity ; for, in order to be generous, you must first learn to be just.

In giving and receiving presents there is more wisdom and good feeling required than very young people can well imagine. Presents have as often made enemies as friends ; and, though the heart of a person must be wrong, where a well-meant offering is not kindly received, however unsuitable it may be, ill-chosen presents are sometimes resented as insults.

The least exceptionable presents are those which consist of the work of your own hands. But then you must be careful not to make something the fashion of which has entirely passed away, or the materials of which are inferior to those then in use. You must ascertain that the article you propose making will be an acceptable gift, and that you can prepare it in the best manner, and then, its being your own work is a compliment to your friend.

It is best not to receive presents from those whom you do not esteem and love. By letting your sentiments be known on this point, you can generally avoid it without a direct refusal.

Of purchased presents there are none more useful or more elegant than books ; and, as these may be had at any price, and to suit every age and taste, you need never be at any loss what to get for a young friend. Rings are the most sentimental gifts, and should be reserved as expressions of real affection, and only accepted and worn when that affection is reciprocal. It is best not to accept, or bestow, very expensive presents, whilst you are still young. The least change in your feelings towards the person would make the obligation irksome, and perhaps cause the giver to repent her liberality. Never accept as a present any ornament or article of dress which is more expensive than suits your condition in life. Its inconsistency

with the rest of your dress will mar, rather than improve your appearance; and its having cost you nothing is no reason for wearing it. A present between equals should be merely the expression of a sentiment, and should be well chosen, but not very expensive, even where your means are large. Some rich girls, that are unpopular, strive to gain friends by extravagant gifts; these you may certainly refuse, for the sooner they learn their error, the better. If you have an allowance, and make your presents out of that, your generosity is more exercised than when you draw directly upon your father's purse; in the latter case, he ought to be consulted in the purchases you make to give away, since they are more his gifts than yours.

Always accept a present, however ill-chosen, in the same kind spirit in which it is offered; and never allow yourself to criticise or depreciate it. Let not your appreciation of a gift be according to its intrinsic worth, but according to the value of the sentiment that prompted it. Let the cheapest offering of a rich heart be honoured, and placed among those of greatest price. Some persons are mean enough to calculate the value of the presents they make, and of those they receive in return, to see whether they have their *quid pro quo*. Such had better turn pedlers at once, and give up the name of lady altogether. If a present, among equals, be not the token of feeling, that must be expressed, it is of no value; and if it be such a token, it is the heart must balance the account, not the purse.

An extensive correspondence among girls of your age is not desirable; it consumes too much time; but a few correspondents are useful as furnishing inducements for you to practice the art of letter-writing. Do not feel bound to write to every girl that begs you to do so; but choose carefully whom you will have in that relation; and when you have a few choice correspondents, do not neglect them and begin every letter

with an apology; but write in due season, and waste no paper in common-place excuses. Always notice the contents of your friend's letter, and endeavour to write of those things which will most interest her.

Madame de Sevigné praises her daughter for her attention to dates, which, she says, shows an interest in the correspondence; a dateless letter certainly loses much of its value; and they are but too common.

Remember the liability of a letter to miscarry, to be opened by the wrong person, to be seen by other eyes than those for whom it is meant, and be very careful what you write to the disadvantage of any one. Praise and admire as much as you please, but beware of blame. Your judgment may be wrong, and you know not when or where it may come up against you, and make you sorry you ever penned it.

Inexperienced letter-writers often feel provoked with themselves, when they have filled a sheet without touching on some topics that they fully intended to introduce, and perceive that they have spread out one of inferior importance over half their paper. This may be avoided by considering, before you begin, all that you wish to write about, and allowing to each topic its proper space.

If your correspondent require that her letters be kept private from all friends, make it a point of honour to comply with her wishes; only make an exception in favour of your mother, in case she should desire to see the correspondence, for young ladies under age should gracefully acknowledge their parent's right of inspection; though, where there is a proper confidence on both sides, it will rarely be enforced.

The more rational and elevated the topics are on which you write, the less will you care for your letters being seen, or for paragraphs being read out of them; and where there is no need of any secrecy, it is best not

to bind your friend by any promises, but to leave it to her discretion.

A letter written in a fair, legible hand, without any blots or erasures, and properly folded, sealed, and directed, is one very good index to a lady's character.

The letters of a regular correspondent should be endorsed, and carefully put away; this facilitates your reference to any one of them, prevents their being lost, or mislaid, or exposed to curious eyes, saves your table from being strewed, and your letter-case from being crowded with them. -

The letters of past years should either be destroyed, or carefully locked up, with directions on the box, that in case of your death they are to be returned, unread, to the writers; or, if that cannot be done, that they should be burnt, unread. The disposal of letters after death is often the only important part of a young girl's last will, and yet this is rarely provided for. It is best to be always so prepared, by making the necessary arrangements whilst in health.

The letters of very young persons rarely have any interest beyond the period in which they are written; they are very seldom read after they are a year old, and the idea of keeping them for future perusal is altogether chimerical. Life is too short, and too much crowded with novel interests, to allow time for reading over quires of paper filled with the chat of young girls, however good it may have been in its day; and, therefore, the wisest plan is, to agree with your correspondent to make each a bonfire of the other's letters when they shall be more than a year old. A year's letters are enough for a memorial of your friend, if she be taken from you; and, by keeping the latest, you will have her most mature compositions.

If you lend books, write your name legibly in the

title-page, and keep a list of those lent, and of the persons borrowing them. Put on paper covers before they go out of your hands, and do the same when you use a borrowed book yourself. If a new book is lent to you, and you have not time to read it directly through, you had better return it, and borrow it again, than keep it lying useless on your shelf, whilst others are longing to have it.

If you take good care of your own books, you will not be likely to injure those you borrow; but if an accident should happen to a book that you have borrowed, and you can replace it with another equally good, you are bound to do so; if it cannot be replaced, a very earnest expression of regret should accompany it home. The attempt to hide an accident, is often worse than the mishap itself, and offends the owner more.

I have spoken of the danger of rushing too hastily into intimacies, and forming rash judgments from insufficient proof. If this is to be guarded against where the opinion is favourable, it is doubly to be avoided when it is likely to be otherwise. How often do we hear one young girl speak of another, as selfish, and that too on some single instance! It is a very serious thing to pronounce upon the motives of another: selfishness is a grave charge, and should not be lightly made; it should show itself in many unquestionable shapes, before we make up our minds that it is the prevailing disposition in any one. We should remember, also, that if we had no selfishness at all, we should not feel another's, when exercised towards us; and that it is generally those who are most selfish themselves, that are most annoyed at the selfishness of others, and complain most of it.

CHAPTER XIII.

BEHAVIOUR TO GENTLEMEN.

A GREAT MISTAKE.—EFFECT OF EXAMPLE.—A GOOD LISTENER.—PERPETUAL SMILES.—RECEIVING COMPANY ALONE.—PECUNIARY FAVOURS.—JOKES.—CONVERSATION.—OFFERS AND REFUSALS.—BEHAVIOUR TO REJECTED LOVERS.—PRESENTS.—FLATTERY.—DISTINCTION BETWEEN FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES.—EARLY MARRIAGES.—DISAPPOINTED AFFECTIONS.—RELIGION THE ONLY CURE FOR A WOUNDED HEART.

WHAT a pity it is, that the thousandth chance of a gentleman's becoming your lover, should deprive you of the pleasure of an unembarrassed intellectual intercourse with all the single men of your acquaintance! Yet such is too commonly the case with young ladies, who have read a great many novels and romances, and whose heads are always running on love and lovers.

Some one has said, that "matrimony is with women the great business of life, whereas with men it is but an incident;" an important one, to be sure, but only one among many to which their attention is directed, and often kept entirely out of view during several years of their early life. Now this difference gives the other sex a great advantage over you; and the best way to equalize your lot, and become as wise as they are, is to think as little about it as they do.

The less your mind dwells upon lovers and matrimony, the more agreeable and profitable will be your intercourse with gentlemen. If you regard men as intellectual beings, who have access to certain sources of knowledge of which you are deprived, and seek to derive all the benefit you can from their peculiar attainments and experience; if you talk to them, as one

rational being should with another, and never remind them that you are candidates for matrimony, you will enjoy far more than you can by regarding them under that one aspect of possible future admirers and lovers. When that is the ruling and absorbing thought, you have not the proper use of your faculties; your manners are constrained and awkward; you are easily embarrassed, and made to say what is ill-judged, silly, and out of place; and you defeat your own views, by appearing to a great disadvantage.

However secret you may be in these speculations, if you are continually thinking of them, and attaching undue importance to the acquaintance of gentlemen, it will most certainly show itself in your manners and conversation, and will betray a weakness that is held in especial contempt by the stronger sex.

Since the customs of society have awarded to man the privilege of making the first advance towards matrimony, it is the safest and happiest way for woman to leave the matter entirely in his hands. She should be so educated, as to consider, that the great end of existence, preparation for eternity, may be equally attained in married or single life; and that no union but the most perfect one is at all desirable. Matrimony should be considered as an incident in life, which, if it come at all, must come without any contrivance of yours, and therefore you may safely put aside all thoughts of it, till some one forces the subject upon your notice, by professions of a particular interest in you.

Lively, ingenuous, conversable, and charming little girls, often spoil into dull, bashful, silent young ladies, and all because their heads are full of nonsense about beaux and lovers. They have a thousand thoughts and feelings which they would be ashamed to confess, though not ashamed to entertain; and their pre-occupation with a subject which they had better let entirely alone, prevents their being the agreeable and rational

companions of the gentlemen of their acquaintance which they were designed to be.

Girls get into all sorts of scrapes by this undue pre-occupation of mind ; they misconstrue the commonest attentions into marks of particular regard, and thus nourish a fancy for a person who has never once thought of them, but as an agreeable acquaintance. They lose the enjoyment of a party, if certain beaux are not there, whom they expected to meet ; they become jealous of their best friends, if the beaux are there, and do not talk to them as much as they wish ; every trifle is magnified into something of importance, a fruitful source of misery, and things of real importance are neglected for chimeras. And all this gratuitous pains-taking defeats its own ends ! The labour is all in vain ; such girls are not the most liked, and those who seem never to have thought about matrimony at all are sought and preferred before them.

We have been shown, in the most striking manner, by Miss Edgeworth, how “manœuvring” to get husbands defeats its own aims. The more things are left to their natural course the better. Where girls are brought up to be good daughters and sisters, to consider the developement of their own intellectual and moral natures as the great business of life, and to view matrimony as a good, only when it comes unsought, and marked by such a fitness of things, inward and outward, as shows it to be one of the appointments of God, they will fully enjoy their years of single life, free from all anxiety about being established, and will generally be the first sought in marriage by the wise and good of the other sex. Those, on the contrary, who are brought up to think the great business of life is to get married, and who spend their lives in plans and manœuvres to bring it about, are the very ones who remain single, or, what is worse, make unhappy matches.

Women are happily endowed with a quick sense of propriety, and a natural modesty, which will generally guide them aright in their intercourse with the other sex; and the more perfectly well-bred and discreet you are in your intercourse with female friends, the more easy will it be for you to acquit yourself well with your male ones.

Very young girls are apt to suppose, from what they observe in older ones, that there is some peculiar manner to be put on in talking to gentlemen, and, not knowing exactly what it is, they are embarrassed and reserved; others observe certain airs and looks used by their elders in this intercourse, and try to imitate them, as a necessary part of company behaviour, and so become affected, and lose that first of charms, simplicity, naturalness. To such I would say, your companions are in error; it requires no peculiar manner, nothing to be put on, in order to converse with gentlemen, any more than with ladies; and the more pure and elevated your sentiments are, and the better cultivated your intellect is, the easier will you find it to converse pleasantly with all. If, however, you happen to have no facility in expressing yourself, and you find it very difficult to converse with persons whom you do not know well, you can still be an intelligent and agreeable listener, and you can show, by your ready smile of sympathy, that you would be sociable, if you could. There is no reason in the world why any one who is not unhappy, should sit in the midst of gay companions, with a face so solemn and unmoved, that she seems not to belong to the company; that she should look so glum and forbidding, that strangers should feel repulsed, and her best friends disappointed. If you cannot look entertained and pleasant, you had better stay away, for politeness requires some expression of sympathy in the countenance, as much as a civil answer on the tongue.

There is an error, the opposite of this, a perpetual and unmeaning smile or snimper, which, if not so repelling as glum looks, is a more hopeless fault, because it is not committed unconsciously, as the other is; it is the result of a studied effort to please, and savours of affectation. I have seen the prettiest girl at a party spoiled by this constant smile. A smile, to have an agreeable effect, must be the natural consequence of a kind, social feeling, and it must be followed by the repose of the risible muscles; and these alternations should pass over the countenance, like the lights and shadows on a field of waving grain in summer. Cultivate, then, a feeling of social sympathy, and the expression of it will come unbidden. Never consider it allowable, in a company of your equals in age, to sit by, silent and unmoved; such conduct is a damp upon the spirits of the rest, to whose pleasure you should feel bound to contribute your part. The expression of unsympathizing silence should be reserved for those occasions where there is something going on of which you disapprove; a grave countenance is then your best protest against the folly of those around you, and will often produce a better effect than words.

The custom of a young lady's receiving company apart from the rest of the family, is attended with many awkward circumstances, and much waste of time. There are very few cases where it had not better be dispensed with.

As to the propriety of receiving invited guests in a room apart from the rest of the family, that must be determined by the customs of the society you live in, and the wishes of your parents. It never seems to me a desirable thing. The spirits of young people are often so high that they are carried away by them, and commit indiscretions for which they are afterwards very sorry, and which the presence of elder friends would have prevented. I would have children on such friendly

terms with their parents, that they should regard a mother's presence as no restraint upon their innocent merriment, only as a welcome regulator, to save them from extremes that they would themselves condemn in a cooler moment.

When and where it is proper to take the arm of a gentleman must be also determined by the customs of the society you live in; only be careful to keep within the prescribed bounds, whatever they may be, and think it no proof of wisdom or valour to venture beyond them.

You should always avoid pecuniary obligations to gentlemen, and contrive, through your father, brothers, or domestics, to be beforehand with them, or else to reimburse what they may have paid for you. If elderly gentlemen, the fathers of families, seem really desirous of paying for you, you may let them; but young men often think it a necessary piece of politeness to pay for ladies, even when they can ill afford it and secretly regret it; therefore it is safest to make a rule of never receiving such favours from those of your own age. Some thoughtless girls not only allow young men to treat them to the play and other public places, but call upon a favourite beau to take a whole party to some such show. I have known a youth who had not a spare sovereign in the world, thus taxed, and obliged to borrow the necessary sum of a friend.

Never condescend to use any little arts or manoeuvres to secure a pleasant beau at a party, or during an excursion; remember that a woman must always wait to be chosen, and "not unsought be won," even for an hour. When you are so fortunate as to be attended by the most agreeable gentleman present, do not make any effort to keep him entirely to yourself; that flatters him too much, and exposes you to being joked about him.

How strange a thing it is, in the constitution of

English society, that the subject of all others the most important, and the most delicate, should be that on which every body is most given to joke and banter their friends. Much mischief has been done by this coarse interference of the world in what ought to be the most private and sacred of our earthly concerns; and every refined, delicate, and high-minded girl should set her face against it, and by scrupulously refraining from such jokes herself, give no one a right to indulge in them at her expense.

Well-educated girls have a wide range of topics, which afford plenty of agreeable and useful discussion between them and their gentlemen friends; and it is much better to talk with them, and with your female friends, of things than of people; of books, pictures, and the beauties and wonders of nature, than of Miss A——'s spoilt complexion, or Mr. B——'s broken engagement, or the quarrel between C—— and D——. If you are familiar with the works of great minds, and spend much time in reading them, or if you love nature and scientific researches, you need not be told to avoid gossip,—you will have no relish for it. If not possessed of much mental cultivation, you may yet find topics enough without talking of individuals; and it is so difficult to do that without sinning against truth or charity, that it is best to avoid it whenever you can.

Some girls, who have but little sense and a great deal of vanity, try to attract the special regard of gentlemen by talking very sentimentally of themselves, their feelings, and experience in life, and try to supply their own want of ideas by quoting largely from those of others. Very silly people can often repeat volumes of modern poetry, songs, and sentences from fashionable novels; but as it requires great sense and discrimination to make apt quotations, theirs are misplaced and become very tiresome; they miss their aim too, for instead of its being agreeable, gentlemen have a great dread of

reciting-ladies, walking scrap-books. If you wish to be on civil terms with a gentleman, and to avoid all intimacy, talk to him only of things that are indifferent to you, and never speak of your private affairs or feelings; if you wish to be kind, but still not intimate, encourage him to speak to you of his own concerns, and show a friendly interest in them. Speak of yourself only to your intimate friends, and of them, let the number be very limited and very well chosen.

The words of a German author to his daughter are so full of wisdom, that the young lady who should make them her rule, would avoid half the scrapes of her companions; they are as follows: "Converse always with your female friends as if a gentleman were of the party, and with young men as if your female companions were present."

As soon as young ladies go into general society, they are liable to receive attentions that indicate a particular regard, and long before they are really old enough to form any such ties, they often receive matrimonial overtures; it is, therefore, highly necessary to know how to treat them.

The offer of a man's heart and hand is the greatest compliment he can pay you, and however undesirable to you those gifts may be, they should be courteously and kindly declined, and, since a refusal is, to most men, not only a disappointment, but a mortification, it should always be prevented, if possible. Men have various ways of cherishing and declaring their attachment; those who indicate the bias of their feelings in many intelligible ways, before they make a direct offer, can generally be spared the pain of a refusal. If you do not mean to accept a gentleman who is paying you very marked attentions, you should avoid receiving them whenever you can; you should show your displeasure when joked about him; and, if sounded by a mutual

friend, let your want of reciprocal feelings be very apparent.

You may, however, be taken entirely by surprise, because there are men who are so secret in these matters, that they do not let even the object of their affections suspect their preference, until they suddenly declare themselves lovers and suitors. In such a case as that, you will need all your presence of mind, or the hesitation produced by surprise may give rise to false hopes. If you have any doubt upon the matter, you may fairly ask time to consider of it, on the grounds of your never having thought of the gentleman in the light of a lover before; but if you are resolved against the suit, endeavour to make your answer so decided as as to finish the affair at once. Inexperienced girls sometimes feel so much the pain they are inflicting, that they use phrases which feed a lover's hopes; but this is mistaken tenderness; your answer should be as decided as it is courteous.

Whenever an offer is made in writing, you should reply to it as soon as possible; and having in this case none of the embarrassment of a personal interview, you can make such a careful selection of words as will best convey your meaning. If the person is estimable, you should express your sense of his merit, and your gratitude for his preference, in strong terms; and put your refusal of his hand, on the score of your not feeling for him that peculiar preference necessary to the union he seeks. This makes a refusal as little painful as possible, and soothes the feelings you are obliged to wound. The gentleman's letter should be returned in your reply, and your lips should be closed upon the subject for ever afterwards. It is his secret, and you have no right to tell it to any one; but if your parents are your confidential friends on all other occasions, he will not blame you for telling them.

Your young female friends should never be allowed to tease or banter you into the betrayal of this secret. You cannot turn your ingenuity to better account than by using it to baffle their curiosity. Some girls are tempted to tell an offer and refusal, in order to account for a cessation of those attentions on the part of the gentleman which have before been so constant and marked as to be observed by their friends. But this is no sufficient reason for telling another person's secret. You cannot always prevent a suspicion of the truth, but you should never confirm it by any disclosures of yours.

If you are so situated as to meet the gentleman whose hand you have refused, you should do it with frank cordiality, and put him at ease by behaving as if nothing particular had passed between you. If this manner of yours is so far mistaken as to lead to a renewal of the offer, let him see, as soon as possible, that he has nothing to hope from importunity, and that if he would preserve your friendship, he must seek for nothing more. Always endeavour to make true friends of your rejected lovers, by the delicacy and honour with which you treat them. If, when your own conduct has been unexceptionable, your refusal to marry a man produces resentment, it argues some fault of character in him, and can only be lamented in silence. The feeling of many a high-minded man, on such an occasion, is akin to that which I once knew expressed by a noble and delicate soul, who had loved a friend of mine in vain; so far from feeling mortified or angry, he said, "I am proud to have loved you." Such a sentiment does honour to both parties.

Never think the less of a man because he has been refused, even if it be by a lady whom you do not highly value. It is nothing to his disadvantage. In exercising their prerogative of making the first advances, the wisest will occasionally make great mistakes, and

the best will often be drawn into an affair of this sort against their better judgment, and both are but too happy if they escape with only the pain of being refused. So far from its being any reason for not accepting a wise and good man when he offers himself to you, it should only increase your thankfulness to the overruling providence of God which reserved him for you, and to the lady through whose instrumentality he is still free to choose.

Accepting presents from gentlemen is a dangerous thing. Some men conclude from your taking one gift, that you will accept another, and think themselves encouraged by it to offer their hearts to you; but even when no misapprehension of this kind follows, it is better to avoid every such obligation; and if you make it a general rule never to accept a present from a gentleman, you will avoid hurting any one's feelings, and save yourself from all further perplexity.

Where ladies are known to be in the habit of refusing presents, and yet are objects of great admiration and devotion, they will often receive anonymous gifts, which it is impossible to elude. When this is the case, it is a good way to put them by, out of sight, and never to mention them. The pleasure of seeing them on your table, and hearing them talked about, and the donor's name speculated upon, is often sufficient to induce a repetition of the anonymous deed, or an acknowledgment of it, which is very embarrassing, as you must either break your rule, or hurt the feelings of the donor.

Of all the votive offerings made to the young and the fair, flowers are the most beautiful and most unexceptionable. Where it is the fashion for gentlemen to present bouquets to their female friends, so many are given, that it seems more like a tribute to the sex than a mark of particular regard, and their perishable nature exempts them from the ban put upon more enduring

memorials. You can accept flowers without committing yourself, and to refuse them would be unnecessary rigour.

If it be unsafe to receive presents, it is doubly so to *make* them to gentlemen, and should never be done except under peculiar circumstances. If a young friend is going away on a distant journey, and you, with other girls, present him with something that will be useful to him on his journey, it is all very well. This is very different from sentimental tokens given privately; these have so much the appearance of a lady's courting a gentleman, that modesty should forbid it.

Suffer not the jokes of thoughtless companions to lead you into the cruel mistake of using the power which a man's attentions may give you, to make him appear ridiculous, or to tyrannize over him in any way. This is a most ungenerous proceeding, and yet very good girls are sometimes guilty of it.

Mistrust a flatterer, whether he make the graces of your person or your mind the theme of his eulogiums. Many women, who are proof against the flattery addressed to their personal charms, are blinded by that which touches their intellectual endowments; but it is all equally injurious, and equally to the discredit of the person who offers it. A gentleman may make you sensible that he admires you, that he has a due appreciation of your powers and attainments, without flattering you; but if he does that, if he entertains you with your own praises, and is constantly paying you fine compliments, he does not respect and esteem you; and you should let him perceive that he has mistaken the means of recommending himself to your good graces.

Some gentlemen try to make themselves agreeable to one young lady by disparaging others of her acquaint-

ance. This shows that a man has a poor opinion of the sex, and that he considers you envious of the charms of your companions; and you will do well to convince him of his mistake.

There should be a wide distinction observed between the casual acquaintance made in a party, or during an excursion, and those whom you allow to visit you on friendly terms. Among the former may be men of doubtful, or even bad character, to whom you cannot always avoid being introduced; but towards whom you should maintain a very cold, reserved manner. Such should never be allowed to visit you at your own home; that privilege should be reserved exclusively for men of irreproachable morals. If you are so happy as to have good brothers, who are grown up, they can assist you greatly in ascertaining the characters of the gentlemen you know, and in selecting for friends only the truly deserving.

Do not be afraid to refuse the acquaintance of a known libertine; it is a tribute which you owe to virtue, and, if generally paid, would do much to purify society.

In treating the subject of behaviour to gentlemen, I shall not attempt to say much on the great topics of love and marriage. I would fain believe that I am writing for a class of ladies too young to need much advice upon that; and though I occasionally hear of school-girls, who forfeit the privileges and pleasures of being grown-up young ladies, and jump at once into the cares of married life, I trust that increased knowledge and wisdom, on the part of the young and old, will prevent such immature marriages, and give women an opportunity of being more fully developed in body and mind, before they subject either to the severe trials which belong to wives and mothers.

Mr. Combe thinks, that “many young people of

both sexes fall sacrifices to early marriages, who might have withstood the ordinary risks of life, and lived together in happiness, if they had delayed their union for a few years, and allowed time for the consolidation of their constitutions."

Early marriage also prevents the literary education of a girl being carried far enough for it to go forward easily amid the cares of a family, and, therefore, it often ceases altogether; in a few years, she loses what little she acquired at school, and degenerates into a mere housekeeper and nurse.

The married school-girl deprives herself of a most delightful and useful stage in her existence, that of a grown-up daughter, maturing under the eye of a mother and the influence of a home circle, with time enough for mental culture, and a useful experience of domestic affairs, without the care which belongs to the mistress of a family. She loses all the varied pleasures of a young lady, and skips at once from childhood to married life.

The writings of Miss Edgeworth abound with excellent lessons on the proper regulation of the affections, and on the consequences of various faults which young ladies are prone to commit, and to them I refer you for further light on the subject.

There is, however, one branch of this important subject which it behoves me to touch upon, because it is fruitful of misery if not nipped in the bud, and it is only by having the mind early trained to right views of it, that the heart can possess power enough to combat it. I allude to that greatest of trials to a woman, disappointment in love, either from an unrequited attachment, or a misplaced one. These are the secret sources of half the wretchedness and ill health that we see among women; and to guard sedulously against this catastrophe should be one of the aims of female education, and the concern of the best friends of youth.

So very common is it for women to be disappointed in their first loves, that a female writer has said, she considered the loss and recovery of the heart to be to the mind what the hooping-cough or measles is to the body,—a necessary disorder to be gone through, after which come maturity and health. But I would not have my readers to consider this painful experience of the heart as so inevitable a process, though it is well to regard it as one from which it is possible entirely to recover. Religion is a balm for the heart's worst wounds. Those who have languished through long years of suffering, occasioned by an early disappointment, and found all the pleasures of the world insufficient to fill the void, have felt themselves to be cured, as by a miracle, when they gave their hearts wholly to God, and made his love their supreme good. Particularly necessary to woman's tender nature is the shield which true piety affords to the affections; and if she would only give her heart first to God, she would be in little danger of bestowing it afterwards unworthily or in vain. Religion has always been considered as a refuge for the unhappy, but its power will be more perfectly manifested when the young and the gay embrace it, as the surest defence against sentimental suffering, and the best guide to happiness in this world.

The more perfectly you perform all your duties, the more diligently you carry on your moral and intellectual education, the higher is your standard of character, and the more spiritual are your aims, the less will be your danger from the tenderness of your heart. Instead of thoughts about love and marriage being busy and importunate, they will take their proper place in your mind; you will go on your way enjoying life by "doing good, and making others happy," and, when the right time and the right person come, your attention will be properly called to the subject, the attraction will become mutual, and a strong individual attachment will

grow up in your heart, adding to your happiness, strengthening your highest and holiest feelings, filling your soul with gratitude to God and to the fellow-disciple who has chosen you to be his help-mate for time and for eternity.

Since but a small proportion of the rising generation give themselves thus early to God, and so secure themselves against the thousand ills and temptations that beset their path ; since women are prone to think much of love, to read books of sickly sentimentality and the poetry of amatory bards ; since girls will put it into each other's heads that they are in love, or that some one is in love with them, it is desirable that they should understand the first symptoms of the disorder, and take early and vigorous measures to stop its dangerous course.

Love, in the heart of a woman, should partake largely of the nature of gratitude ; she should love, because she is already loved by one deserving her regard ; and if you never allowed yourself to think of gentlemen in the light of lovers or husbands until you were asked to do so, you would escape much suffering.

The credulity of women, on the subject of being loved, is very great ; they often mistake a common liking for a particular regard, and, on this foundation, build up a castle in the air, and fill it with all the treasures of their bright hopes and confiding love, and, when some startling fact destroys the vision, they feel as if the whole creation were a blank to them, and they were the most injured of women. It is safer to be very sceptical on the subject of being loved ; but, if you do make the mistake, take all the blame to yourself, and save your dignity by secrecy, if you cannot keep your heart from loving.

If you only have a wholesome dread of being entangled, and watch over your preferences with a jealous

eye, you need never be caught in the snares of Cupid. If one person is becoming uppermost in your thoughts, if his society is more and more necessary to your happiness, if what he does and says seems more important than that of any one else, it is time to be on your guard, time to deny yourself the dangerous pleasure of his company, time to turn your thoughts resolutely to something else. The beginning of a preference may be checked, it may be stifled to death ; it is only by indulgence that it becomes unmanageable. Speaking of it to any one, even to your bosom friend, is dangerous ; so long as no one knows your weakness, you have strong inducements to behave as if it did not exist, and that self-command is good for you. Directing the mind vigorously to some new study is a wholesome remedy, and a generous devotion of yourself to the interests and happiness of others will save you from dangerous reverie and painful reflections. There are few partialities, which, if taken early enough, and dealt with in this way, cannot be overcome without any breaking of hearts, or destruction of health and happiness ; whilst the power gained by such self-discipline is a permanent advantage to the character. For good paternal advice upon the subject of *discovering a prepossession*, I would refer you to that which Mr. Tyrold gives his daughter, in the novel of *Camilla* by Mrs. d'Arblay.

Where the attachment has ever been reciprocal, and has been allowed to gain ground, before the necessity came for combating it, the struggle will of course be harder, and the suffering much greater. I know of no sufficient remedy for this, but vital piety ; that giving of the heart to God, which enables a disciple to say, " Whom have I in heaven but Thee ? and there is none on earth that I desire in comparison of Thee."

The cure for a wounded heart which piety affords is so complete, that it makes it possible for the tenderest

and most constant natures to love again. When a character is thus disciplined and matured, its sympathies will be called forth only by superior minds ; and, if a kindred spirit presents itself as a partner for life, and is accepted, the union is likely to be such as will make the lady rejoice that her former predilection was overruled.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONDUCT AT PUBLIC PLACES.

USE OF LECTURES.—TRUE POLITENESS.—SHOPPING.—
BEHAVIOUR AT CHURCH.

THE delivery of lectures on literary and scientific subjects should be held in great esteem by women, if it were only for the good they do those who would otherwise never quit the narrow round of household cares ; and who have no access to libraries, or to cultivated society ; as well as to those who think they have no time to drink at those fountains. To such, even the sprinkling of a lecture is refreshing, and sometimes leads to a draught from other streams.

Lectures are valuable, not so much, perhaps, for the amount of information they convey, as for the ideas they suggest, the means of knowledge they point out, the direction they give to the thoughts. A lecture on the life and writings of some great man, induces many of the audience to read his works, and enables them to do it with profit ; they have learned from the lecture the scope and tendency of the book, and from the account of the author they can better understand his writings. A lecture on any branch of natural history leads people to examine specimens, and to read books upon the subject ; and this impulse, given to minds that would otherwise rust in inactivity, is an incalculable good. But, in order to reap the full benefit of a course of lectures, it is necessary to make a study of the subject whilst attending it, and to make copious notes of each lecture from memory. However interested you may be at the time, you easily forget all you have heard, unless you make a written memorial of it, whilst it is fresh in your mind.

Besides the direct advantages of this sort of instruction, there are indirect ones to be gained. It suggests useful topics of conversation; it affords an opportunity for learning to respect the rights of strangers, and to behave courteously and delicately to all. The conduct of others, under such circumstances, is a living and instructive lesson, presenting models of all that we ought to imitate or avoid.

If you wish to be considered and treated as a well-bred lady, you must carry your good manners everywhere with you. It is not a thing that can be laid aside and put on at pleasure. True politeness is uniform disinterestedness in trifles, accompanied by the calm self-possession which belongs to a noble simplicity of purpose; and this must be the effect of a Christian spirit running through all you do, or say, or think; and, unless you cultivate it and exercise it, upon all occasions and towards all persons, it will never be a part of yourself. When you try to assume it for some special purpose, it will sit awkwardly upon you, and often fail you at your utmost need. If you are not polite to your laundress, you are in great danger of not being so to the lady whom you most wish to propitiate; you cannot be sure of possessing yourself; rudeness of manner, occasionally indulged, will steal upon you unawares. The charm which true Christian politeness sheds over a person, though not easily described, is felt by all hearts, and responded to by the best feelings of our nature. It is a talisman of great power, to smoothen your way along the rugged paths of life, and to turn towards you the best side of all you meet.

This politeness is very essential to the right transaction of that great business of woman's life, *shopping*. The variety afforded by the shops renders people difficult to please, and the latitude they take in examining and asking the price of goods which they have no thought of buying, is often trying to the patience of

those who attend upon them. The truly conscientious would do well to set bounds to their fancy in this respect, and have some consideration for those who wait upon their caprices. If, when you wish to buy a pair of gloves, or a ribbon, you go into several shops, and tumble over the goods in each, and take up the time, and try the patience of several people, think how disproportioned is the trouble you give, to the want in question. Some persons behave in shopping, as if no one had any rights, or any feelings, but the purchasers. If you are habitually attentive to the convenience of others, you will prevent those who attend upon you from opening more parcels of goods than is necessary.

Be in the habit of calculating for yourself the amount you are to pay, instead of blindly paying whatever you are told is the sum due; always look at the change you receive, and satisfy yourself that it is right, before you put it into your purse. If two persons agree in their calculations, it is most likely they are correct, but, without this check, you may pay more or less than you owe; for shopmen often make blunders, and a crown given in a mistake may deprive you of the pleasure of giving it away in charity.

I cannot imagine any one of a highly-cultivated mind, and full of useful occupation, with a just appreciation of the value of time, and of the true end of existence, being fond of shopping, as a pastime. To such, therefore, I would say, if you would economize time and money, never go shopping with girls of your own age; never look round to see what there is to tempt you to useless expenditure; but, when you have ascertained, at home, that you really need some articles of dress, make up your mind as to the material and the cost, and then go, either alone or with an experienced friend, and make the purchase. If you afterwards see something that you like better it will not trouble you, if you have learned not to attach much importance to

the subject, and would rather wear something less becoming, than spend your time in searching all the shops for the prettiest pattern.

Always remember that a shop is a public place ; that you are speaking before, and often to, strangers, and, therefore, there should be a certain degree of reserve in all you do and say. Never carry on any conversation with your companions on topics that have nothing to do with your shopping, and do not speak or laugh aloud ; but dispatch your business in a quiet and polite manner, equally removed from haughtiness and familiarity.

Every person of reflection must feel the propriety of adapting her deportment to the place and to the occasion, and therefore we rarely see any great violation of decorum in places of public worship. So much of the good to be derived from public worship depends upon the state of mind in which we enter upon the services, that the few minutes which precede them ought to be better applied than in arranging your dress, or watching for the entrance of your friends, or spying out new bonnets and strange faces. Those moments spent in self-recollection, in calling home your wandering thoughts, and centering them upon God, would prepare you for the devotional exercise in which you are about to join, in appearance, if not in reality ; or for that silent prayer of the soul, which ascends alone to the Father of spirits. The reading of a hymn, or a chapter in the Bible, is sometimes a help to devotional feeling ; a far better occupation than watching the entrance of the congregation. It is so desirable to maintain a devotional frame of mind throughout the services, that we should avoid everything which may disturb it in ourselves or others ; and so far from whispering about irrelevant things it is better to suffer some personal inconvenience, and to omit some little civilities, than to risk interrupting a train of pious thought.

If the place and the occasion fail, as they sometimes

will, to call up a devotional frame of mind, we must be doubly on our guard not to let our wandering thoughts be the means of disturbing those around us. All unnecessary motions and noises should be scrupulously avoided ; and, by smothering the sound of a cough in a pocket handkerchief, we may render it far less annoying than it would otherwise be.

If a strong impression has been made upon your mind, and your heart has been filled with the highest emotions of which it is capable, you will not be disposed, on quitting the church, to greet everybody you know, and enter into the common-place chit-chat of the day. You will rather avoid the salutations of indifferent people, and, quietly wending your way home, you will endeavour to preserve your mind in that state of solemnized feeling.

CHAPTER XV.

DINNER PARTIES.

A DINNER ENGAGEMENT BINDING.—DRESS.—ENTRANCE.
— PLACES. — MANNERS AT TABLE. — ACCIDENTS. —
EATING AND CONVERSING.

HAVING been particularly requested to write a chapter on the manners which belong to dinner and evening parties, I will endeavour to suggest a few rules, which may be of general application; but no precise instructions on points of etiquette can be given, as that varies in degree in different places, and can only be properly learned by personal observation and inquiry.

Whenever dinners are given to invited guests, civility requires that an early answer should be returned. An acceptance, in such a case, should be as binding as a promissory note; and no slight cause should ever be allowed to prevent your fulfilling your engagement. This occasion is a very different affair from an evening party, where you would not, perhaps, be missed, if you stayed away; only a certain number can be asked to a dinner, and these are carefully selected and assorted, so as to be agreeable to each other; and, if one or more fail at last, their places cannot be filled up, and the vacancies at the table mar the completeness of the party, and throw a damp on the spirits of the host and hostess. A dinner engagement should, therefore, be regarded as particularly binding, and as imposing an obligation to be strictly punctual. Want of punctuality at a dinner party is an affront to the whole company, as well as to the gentleman and lady of the house.

A ceremonious dinner requires that the company should be well and handsomely dressed, though not in such gay attire as is usually worn at a ball, or evening party. Your hair should be arranged with great neatness, and everything about you should be in perfect order. Having given proper attention to your toilet before you leave home, think no more of it afterwards; it is very disagreeable to see any one continually adjusting her dress; it shows that the thoughts are upon it, whereas the mind should be given to what is passing around you.

Arrived at the place, and disrobed of your shawl or cloak, let your gloves be on, and, with erect carriage and firm step, enter the drawing-room, either with your parents, three together, or following them alone, or on the arm of a friend or sister. Look towards the lady of the house, and walk up at once to her, not turning to the right or left, or noticing any one, till you have made your courtesy to her, and to the host. Then, you may turn off towards the young people, and take a seat among them, with that agreeable expression of ready sympathy on your face, which encourages conversation. Be quick to answer, when addressed, always looking the person in the face; be observant of all that is passing around you, and ready to be amused with whatever presents itself.

A child, a picture, an annual, a worked ottoman, a bunch of flowers, may furnish topics for conversation, till dinner is announced. When that moment comes, stand back for all the married ladies to pass out before you; and, if a gentleman, wishing to escort you, attempt to lead you out before them, draw back, and do not let him. If you are a stranger in a place, and the dinner is made for you, young as you are, the gentleman of the house will lead you out, next to the lady of the feast, and in that case, it is proper for you to go. But, when you are visiting with your parents,

your mother will receive the first honours, and you may fall back among the young people.

On entering the dining-room, you must use your eyes, to discover which part of the table is considered the most honourable; for, in some places, it is only that end where the lady sits; in others, both ends are equally honoured, and the young folks sit in the middle; in other houses, the host and hostess sit in the middle on each side, and take the most honoured guests next to them. Try to seat yourself among the least important portion of the company, unless desired by the gentleman or lady of the house to take a particular seat; in which case, you should always comply.

When seated, spread your napkin in your lap, to protect your dress from accident; take off your gloves and put them in your lap, under the napkin. If soup is helped first, take some, whether you like it or not; because, if you do not, you alone may be unemployed, or else the regular progress of things is disturbed, to help you to some other dish; so take the soup, and sip a few spoonful, if you do no more. Where the fashion of asking ladies to take wine prevails, it generally begins directly after soup; if you are asked, do not refuse, because that is a rebuff, but accept the challenge graciously; choose one of the wines named to you, and, your glass being something less than half filled, look full at the gentleman you are to drink with, then drop your eyes as you bow your head to him, and lift the glass to your lips, whether you drink a drop or not. If challenged a second time, accept, and have a drop added to your glass, and bow as before. If asked what part of anything you will have, always make a choice, whether you have a preference or not; because it is most agreeable to the carver to have the matter decided by you.

If you sit near a dish of vegetables, or a gravy

tureen, be on the alert, to help to its contents, when called upon. It must depend on the number of servants in attendance, and on the style in which the dinner is given, whether it is proper for you to pass plates, or not; at some tables, it is a necessary attention, whilst at others, it would be a barbarous piece of officiousness. If you are calm and quiet, and self-possessed, you will easily see what is right, and fall into the manners of the place.

If you would avoid embarrassing accidents, move very gently; but if you should happen to meet with an accident at table, endeavour to preserve your composure, and do not add to the discomfort you have created, by making an unnecessary fuss about it. The easier such things are passed over, the better. I remember hearing it told of a very accomplished gentleman, that when carving a tough goose, he had the misfortune to send it entirely out of the dish, and into the lap of the lady next to him; on which he very coolly looked her full in the face, and, with admirable gravity and calmness, said, "Madam, I will thank you for that goose." In a case like this, a person must necessarily suffer so much, and be such an object of compassion to the company, that the kindest thing he could do, was to appear as unmoved as possible. This manner of bearing such a mortifying accident gained him more credit, than he lost by his awkward carving.

Such presence of mind as this, we do not expect from very young persons; but even they may refrain from exclamations, if by accident anything is spilt on their clothes, and decline any assistance that would derange the company, or interrupt conversation. Should you be so unfortunate as to break anything at table, briefly express regret, and blame your own awkwardness; but even then take care not to say too much about it.

Some persons are so engrossed by the eatables, that they care not for the conversation at the dinner-table ; others are so occupied with talking, that they forget to eat ; the first annoys the company, the latter your hostess, so it is better to avoid both extremes. If conversation prevails among the elders of the company, and you wish to listen to it, you may do so with propriety, provided your countenance shows that you are an attentive and pleased listener ; but to sit silent and with forbidding looks, or a dull, tired expression, is a trespass against the social feelings of all present. To yawn, or gape, is unpardonable rudeness.

CHAPTER XVI.

EVENING PARTIES.

ENTERING A ROOM.—SELF-POSSESSION.—MEANS OF ENJOYMENT.—SIMPLICITY.—DRESS.—POLITENESS IN A CROWD.—SUPPER.—ENGROSSING BEAUX.—DEPARTURE.

THE days of minuets and curtsies, and handing of ladies by the tips of their fingers, are gone! and with them is gone much graceful carriage, and many of the distinguishing traits of a high-bred lady are lost. When a lady was handed into a room, at arm's length, she had an opportunity of making a graceful curtsy, and the gentleman a low bow; but when her arm is tucked under that of the gentleman, a little bob of the head and neck is all that each can accomplish, and therefore entering a large assembly has ceased to be a matter of any consequence. There are, to be sure, different degrees of awkwardness in this simple act of being led in, and saluting the lady of the house; but the most graceful person has no opportunity of doing herself justice. As much bending of the knees and body as is compatible with your position should be attempted; but a very retreating curtsy on the lady's part, with a forward bending of the gentleman's body, in a bow, has a very bad effect; they appear to be pulling two ways at once. Having made your obeisance as well as you can, be careful not to step back upon those who are coming after you, but make way for them, by turning off on one side.

All unmeaning and unnecessary movements are contrary to the rules of grace and good-breeding. When not intencionally in motion, your body and limbs should be in perfect rest. Addison says, that "the use of dancing-lessons is to teach a lady how to sit still grace-

fully." Your whole deportment should give the idea that your person, your voice, and your mind are entirely under your own control. Self-possession is the first requisite to good manners, and where it is wanting there is generally a reason for it in some wrong feeling or false appreciation of things. Vanity, a love of display, an overweening desire to be admired, are great obstacles to self-possession; whereas, a well-disciplined and well-balanced character will generally lead to composure and self-command. In a very elegant assemblage in a large drawing-room, I once saw a young lady walk quietly and easily across the apartment, to speak to a friend; who said to her, "I wanted very much to get to you, but I had not the courage to cross the room. How could you do it, all alone, too, and with so many persons looking at you?"

"I did not think of anybody's looking at me," was the reply; and in that lay the secret of her self-possession. Very modest people believe themselves to be of too little consequence to be observed; but conceited ones think everybody must be looking at them. Inexperienced girls, who are not wanting in modesty, are apt to dread going into a crowded room, from an idea that every eye will be turned upon them; but, after a while, they find that nobody cares to look at them, and that the greater the crowd the less they are observed.

Your enjoyment of a party depends far less on what you find there, than on what you carry with you. The vain, the ambitious, the designing, will be full of anxiety when they go, and of disappointment when they return. A short triumph will be followed by a deep mortification, and the selfishness of their aims defeats itself. If you go to see, and to hear, and to make the best of whatever occurs, with a disposition to admire all that is beautiful, and to sympathize in the pleasures of others, you can hardly fail to spend the time pleasantly. The less you think of yourself and your claims to at-

tention, the better. If you are much attended to, receive it modestly, and consider it as a happy accident; if you are little noticed, use your leisure in observing others. A woman of sound sense will neither be elated by attention, nor depressed by the want of it; and if not invited to join in the dance, which would so well suit her buoyant spirits, she will indemnify herself by entering into conversation with some agreeable person near her, or by studying a picture, or some other specimen of art, which the place may afford. There is much pleasure to be taken in at the eyes, by a person who understands the art of seeing

The popular belle, who is the envy of her own sex and the admiration of the other, has her secret griefs and trials, and thinks that she pays very dearly for her popularity; whilst the girl who is least attended to in crowded assemblies is apt to think hers the only hard lot, and that there is unmixed happiness in being a reigning belle. She alone, whose steady aim is to grow better and wiser every day of her life, can look with an equal eye on both extremes. If your views are elevated, and your feelings are ennobled and purified by communion with gifted spirits, and with the Father of spirits, you will look calmly on the gayest scenes of life, you will attach very little importance to the transient popularity of a ball-room; your endeavour will be to bring home from every visit some new idea, some valuable piece of information, or some useful experience of life.

Next to great beauty, good manners are the chief attraction in a party; these, combined with good sense and cultivation of mind, generally procure a young lady as much attention as is good for her, as much as she ought to expect.

The great temptation of this sort of amusement is, to do or say something which is not true to yourself, and therefore you should be as much on your guard to

speaking the exact truth in a party, as if you were on oath in a court of justice. The desire of pleasing, the wish to appear that which they know another admires, too often makes girls affected, and induces them to express sentiments they do not really feel. If you are conscientious, and call yourself to a strict account for all you say and do, you will suffer so much from any such want of truth, as to be saved from the degradation which invariably follows its habitual indulgence; but if you are careless of yourself, and think more of the effect you have produced on others than of the good or evil you have done to your own soul, you may be led away by your desire of attracting attention, till you become false to yourself and to others, and your whole character will be corrupted by this early perversion. It is a mistaken policy too; because there is a greater charm in truth and simplicity than in any particular sentiments that can be feigned. All the most delightful heroines in Miss Edgeworth's tales, are distinguished for their perfect sincerity, their noble candour. How much we love Lady Geraldine, Belinda, and Grace Nugent, for their honesty of character, for the truth of all their words!

There is a charm in mere youth which is set off to the best advantage by a simple style of dress. Young girls lose a great deal, if they sacrifice their peculiar privileges for the sake of ornament and an elaborate toilet, which would better become them at a later period. The simplest muslin frock, if well made, and accompanied by well-dressed hair, neat gloves and shoes, will become a girl in her teens far better than rich satins and laces. If you have any doubt as to the size and nature of the party you are going to attend, it is better to be on the safe side, and err by being too little rather than too much dressed.

Do not stake your gentility on going late to parties; but show your love of reasonable hours, by going as early as it will do to go. Late hours are the bane of

those enjoyments; all wise and good people should do their utmost to check the folly of turning night into day, by midnight revels and morning sleep.

There is a great difference in the manner of moving about in a crowd; some push rudely through, regardless of the finery they are disturbing; whilst a true gentlewoman wins her graceful way without harm or offence to any, but conciliating every one she approaches. She never retreats without looking to see if she incommodes any person behind her; she never pushes forward without taking every pains to avoid coming in contact with the dresses around her.

At the supper-table, too, great difference of character is seen. Where things are so managed as to give the elderly and married people the precedence which they ought to have, there will sometimes be a want of proper courtesy in the eagerness shown by the young people to reach the scene of action. The pushing and crowding is sometimes more like that of a mob than what befits a private house, and an occasion where all will be equally well served without it. Gentlemen often feel their pride engaged in doing their utmost to provide well for the ladies on their arms, and so press on too violently; it is, therefore, incumbent upon a lady to repress the earnestness of her cavalier, to say she is in no haste, she will go presently, when there is more room. A slight movement back from the crowd will often affect all around you, and induce others to wait as you do; thus a party is formed who take their supper half an hour later, and all are better accommodated. In the matter of eating the good things provided, the characters of individuals are shown, and very greedy propensities will occasionally appear, under very fair forms. It is best to make up your mind beforehand as to what refreshments agree with you, and what do not, and then partake of them accordingly. Both health and delicacy are best consulted by avoiding mixtures;

to eat freely of one thing is better than to eat of a variety of things, and to eat slowly is not only better for your stomach, but for your reputation too ; for what is more disagreeable than to see a person devouring rich things as though they were famished, or never before had tasted anything so good.

However agreeable a beau may be, he should not be allowed to engross a lady for any considerable time. Some gentlemen make a practice of selecting a young lady whom they like, and keeping her to themselves for the greatest part of an evening, unless the lady take measures to prevent it. If she appear pleased with the *tête-à-tête*, other gentlemen will avoid interrupting it ; and thus a foundation is laid for one of those idle reports which every one should take pains to avoid. In such a case, you need not hesitate to break off the conversation, and to change your position so as to ensconce yourself among ladies, and get rid of such marked attentions. No man of delicacy would choose so to exhibit a *réal* preference of the heart ; this sort of monopoly is one of the amusements of the selfish, and if you suffer it, they will think you honoured by their notice.

There is a predicament, the opposite of this, which inexperienced young girls sometimes fall into ; it is that of keeping a gentleman talking to them longer than he wishes, because they do not give him a chance to break off. They are perhaps standing apart from the rest of the company, and he cannot leave her without her remaining quite alone. If you suspect that a gentleman is desirous of departing, make it easy for him to go, by changing your position, or speaking to another person ; taking care not to do it so pointedly, that he shall be obliged to go if he do not wish it. If you have a quick eye and observe the expression of faces, you will be able to regulate your words and actions so as to be true to yourself, without hurting the feelings of any. The less you think of yourself, and

the more you consider others, the more agreeable you will be.

When about to leave, put on your things expeditiously, if you would not exhaust the patience of all concerned. A gentleman is so easily equipped, that he often has to wait, and cannot but wonder at the time ladies consume; to lengthen his penance, by *dandling*, or stopping to talk, is not fair, and shows a want of proper consideration for others.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONVERSATION.

THE UNRULY MEMBER. — TWO BESETTING SINS. — RIDICULE. — EXAGGERATION. — MISUSE OF WORDS. — FAVOURITE WORDS MISAPPLIED. — TRIFLES MAGNIFIED. — IRONY. — LITTLE GAMES AND RIDDLES. — ADVANTAGES OF HEARING GOOD CONVERSATION. — CONVERSATION MADE AN ART. — FLUENCY WITHOUT METHOD. — EXAMPLE. — LISTENING WELL.

MANY of the hints which would otherwise be arranged under this head, have already been given, in connexion with other subjects; but much remains to be said; and, were I to go fully into the duties that belong to the government of the tongue, I should fill a volume, instead of a chapter. But this little work, as already premised, is addressed to those who have been morally and religiously brought up; and I must trust, therefore, to their being aware of the evils and dangers which belong to that unruly member, as they are powerfully described by the apostle James, and other writers of the Old and New Testaments. The proper government of the tongue is the result of thorough Christian discipline, and I might as well hope to change the nature of water, flowing from a bitter fountain, by throwing sugar into the streams that branch off from it, as to give rules that will render conversation sinless, whilst the heart remains unregenerate, and the character is formed on worldly principles.

Young people are generally so ardent and so incautious, that whatever is in their thoughts and feelings will find vent in their conversation. The vain, the proud, the envious, the suspicious, will each

exhibit in it her prevailing fault, and nothing but that diligent “keeping of the heart” recommended in the sacred volume, can correct the evil.

Those who have felt the blessed influences of religion, and are endeavouring to regulate their thoughts and words by the Christian standard, will often have occasion to lament the errors they commit in conversation; to correct these is the business of a life, for the apostle says truly, “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.” To give a few hints to such as are striving after this perfection, and to show how conversation may be made not only an innocent recreation, but the means of intellectual growth, is the object of this chapter.

Supposing my young friends, then, to be on their guard against the graver errors of the tongue, such as falsehood, calumny, violations of confidence, and the like, I would warn them against the lesser sins of young people, which, from their very commonness, might escape their notice in the earlier stages of self-discipline. Among these are the love of ridicule, the spirit of exaggeration, &c., which are so apt to pervade the conversation of inexperienced girls, and are often indulged in by them, without a suspicion of their real nature and tendency.

The practice of turning into ridicule whatever does not please her in the appearance or conduct of others, too often gains a young lady the reputation of being a very agreeable companion, and her lively sallies are mistaken for wit. But, in truth, there is no faculty of the mind that can be cultivated at a less expense of wit and wisdom, than that of ridicule, though none that finds more ready auditors; for the silliest can join in the laugh which it raises, and the wisest can hardly resist its infection.

A sense of the ridiculous is an original faculty of the human mind; it is much keener in some indivi-

duals than in others, and, under proper management, it might possibly find its place in a Christian character; but it is like some plants, which, though*wholesome in themselves, are never admitted into our gardens, because they spread too rapidly, and root out what is far more valuable. The love of ridicule grows by indulgence, till it destroys the power of discrimination, lessens the sensibility to others' pain, disturbs the balance of justice, blunts all noble and generous feelings, and gives a general taint of coarseness to the whole character. There is nothing too innocent or unobtrusive to be food for this morbid love of fun; nothing too valuable or too beautiful, to be viewed in this false light; nothing too high, and nothing too low, to minister to this diseased appetite; and the pain which it often inflicts upon those who are its innocent objects, is a small evil, compared with the immense injury it does to the mind that entertains it. Besides the evils already enumerated, the love of ridicule indisposes the mind to find pleasure in admiring, which is robbing it of one of its noblest attributes; one stamped with the approbation of God, by being made the source of pure and exquisite enjoyment. If you would taste the full happiness of admiring all that is good, and true, and beautiful, in the beings who surround you, avoid the practice of ridiculing them, for these cannot exist together.

Equally common with the love of ridicule, is the spirit of exaggeration. How many persons, who would be shocked at the idea of telling a deliberate falsehood, yet daily violate truth, by exaggerated statements and extravagant expressions! This fault often shows itself in childhood, and has its origin in the activity of the imagination, joined to an imperfect knowledge of language. Where it is not early corrected, it grows with the growth, and strengthens with the strength, and becomes one of the most incurable

maladies of the mind. By some, it is suddenly assumed, as a means of making themselves agreeable to their companions, or by way of equalling them in their style of conversation. Now I would earnestly beg those who are voluntarily adopting this habit of speech, as they would learn an accomplishment, to avoid it while it is yet in their power, and to regard it in its true light, as a sin against God, against their fellow-beings, and against their own natures.

It is a sin against God, inasmuch as it violates his holy laws, which require perfect truth of speech. It is a sin against our fellow-creatures, because it lessens the confidence necessary to social intercourse, and because it leads to misrepresentation and injustice. It is a sin against our own natures, because it deadens the conscience, lessens the reverence for truth, blunts that nice perception by which it was intended we should see things as they really are, and accustoms the mind to entertain distorted and inflated visions of its own creating.

Besides all this moral evil attendant on a habit of exaggeration, it is a great mistake to suppose that it makes a person more agreeable, or that it adds to the importance of her statements. The value of a person's words is determined by her habitual use of them.—“I like it much.” “It is well done,” will mean as much in some mouths, as “I am infinitely delighted with it,” “It is the most exquisite thing you ever saw,” will in others. Such large abatements are necessarily made for the statements of these romancers, that they really gain nothing in the end, but find it difficult sometimes to obtain credence for so much as is really true; whereas a person who is habitually sober and discriminating in the use of language, will not only inspire confidence, but be able to produce a great effect by the occasional use of a superlative.

Fidelity and exactness are indispensable in a narra-

tive, and the habit of exaggerating destroys the power of accurate observation and recollection, which would render the story truly interesting. If, instead of trying to embellish her account with the fruits of her imagination, a young lady possessed the power of seizing upon the points best worth describing, and could give an exact account of them, she would be far more entertaining than any exaggeration could make her; for there is no romance like that of real life; and no imaginings of an inexperienced girl can equal in piquancy the scenes and characters that are every day presented to our view. Extravagant expressions are sometimes resorted to, in order to atone for deficiencies of memory and observation; but they will never hide such defects; and an habitual use of them lowers the tone of the mind, and leads to other deviations from the simplicity of truth and nature.

Another way of falsifying a narrative is, by taking for granted what you do not know, and speaking of it as if you did. This jumping at conclusions is a fruitful source of false reports, and does great mischief in the world. Let no one imagine that she is walking conscientiously, who is not in the habit of discriminating nicely between what she knows to be fact, and what she only supposes to be such.

Some girls, without any wish to exaggerate, contract a habit of using certain forcible expressions on all occasions, great and small, and consequently make some very absurd speeches. A young lady, for example, told me she was "passionately fond of embroidery." She had used the word *passionately* in the sense of *very*, till she had lost all perception of its true meaning.

The frequent use of some favourite word or phrase is a common defect in conversation, and can only be guarded against by asking your friends to point it out to you, whenever they observe such a habit. Your

own ear, having become accustomed to it, may not detect it.

There is great danger of the young and ardent doing injustice to their companions, by magnifying trifles, drawing large conclusions from small premises, and judging from a partial knowledge of facts. How often have I seen a young girl, all eagerness to tell some extraordinary thing about a companion, and representing some trifling occurrence as the most atrocious ill-conduct; when the very next hour, perhaps, has brought to light some circumstance that changes entirely the whole aspect of the case, and shows that all her excitement was wasted on a mistake! It is a good rule never to believe anything on mere report, that is inconsistent with what you already know of a person. Consider how much more probable it is, that there is some error in the statement, than that a trust-worthy man or woman should do that which is entirely out of character. When some false rumour about yourself or family reaches your ear, instead of being provoked by it, lay it up as a lesson against believing what you hear reported of others.

Talking ironically is sometimes indulged in to such an excess as to become very tiresome to the hearers. A little dash of irony enlivens conversation, and when well and sparingly introduced, it is pleasant enough; but some girls have such a habit of it, that on all occasions, to persons of all ages, all degrees of intimacy and acquaintance, on all subjects, whether grave or gay, they will answer you in that strain. All reverence for age and superior wisdom, and all sense of propriety, are sacrificed to the indulgence of this propensity, whilst they are unconscious of its being in excess. To make the whole strain of conversation ironical, is like serving up a dinner composed wholly of gravies, sauces, and condiments, without one substantial dish.

In like manner all jesting, bantering, and quizzing, should be very sparingly indulged in, and with constant reference to the feelings of others, or you may inflict a wound before you are aware of it.

There is, in some persons, a diseased sensitiveness which it is impossible to guard against; for they consider every remark made in conversation as a covert attack on them, and immediately begin a personal justification, whilst the unfortunate offender sits by, amazed at the construction put upon her words, and too much disconcerted to disclaim it.

When, in company with your young friends, the conversation flags, or becomes too trifling, or joking is carried too far, it is in the power of some leading spirit to give a new impulse to the party, by proposing to play some of those games which exercise the mind in a useful and innocent manner, and are, at the same time, very amusing. Charades, too, and riddles, and all such puzzles, may occasionally prove an agreeable resource: and it is well to have a selection of the best in your memory, ready to be produced in a fitting moment. If any of my readers feel disposed to treat such amusements with contempt, I would beg them to read Mrs. Barbauld's paper on Riddles, as the high authorities she quotes in their favour may reconcile them to this sort of play of the mind. In order to enjoy this sport, a few rules of politeness should be attended to, like the following. Be as willing to puzzle over a riddle, as to give one out. If you are previously acquainted with the solution of a riddle, do not tell it; but let the person who gave it out have that privilege. If you do not know it, and do not like to puzzle over it, do not insist on being told what it is, before the rest of the company. If you have no readiness in guessing charades, &c., you can amuse yourself with their ingenuity, when they are explained, and do not

feel mortified at your ill success, and then try to hide it, by speaking contemptuously of the pastime.

Those who have not learned to think, and have no facility in methodizing and arranging the materials which accumulate in their memories, will find themselves much assisted in the task, by talking over with a friend what they have lately acquired. If that friend be wiser than they are, so much the better; but if not, something will be gained by the effort to express their ideas to another.

Great are the advantages to be reaped from listening attentively to the conversation of intelligent and cultivated people, and you should be earnest to improve every such opportunity. When a sensible discussion of a new book, or interesting topic of any sort, is going on in your presence, you may be justified in breaking off a trifling conversation with one of your own age, and in putting aside any common avocation, in order to give your undivided attention to it.

Good conversation is one of the highest attainments of civilized society. It is the readiest way in which gifted minds exert their influence, and as such, is worthy of all consideration and cultivation. I remember hearing an American ask an English traveller for his opinion on the conversational powers of the Americans compared with those of the English; "Your fluency," he replied, "rather exceeds that of the old world, but conversation in America is not cultivated as an art." The idea of its being so considered anywhere, was new to the company; and much discussion followed the departure of the stranger, as to the desirableness of making conversation an art. Some thought the more natural and spontaneous it was, the better; some confounded art with artifice, and hoped their countrymen would never leave their own plain honest way of talking, to become adepts in hypocrisy.

and affectation. At last one, a little wiser than the rest, explained the difference between art and artifice, asked the cavillers if they had never heard of the art of thinking, or the art of writing; and said he presumed the art of conversing was of the same nature. And so it is. By this art persons are taught to arrange their ideas methodically, and to express them with clearness and force; thus saving much precious time, and avoiding those tedious narrations, which interest no one but the speaker. It enforces the necessity of observing the effect of what is said, and leads a talker to stop, when she finds that she has ceased to fix the attention of her audience.

The art of conversing would enable a company, when a good topic was once started, to keep it up, till it had elicited the powers of the best speakers, and it would prevent its being cut short in the midst, by the introduction of something entirely foreign to it.

Fluency of speech seems to me a natural gift, varying much in different individuals, and capable of being rendered either a delightful accomplishment, or a most wearisome trait of character, according as it is combined with a well or ill-disciplined mind.

Some persons seem to forget that mere talking is not conversing; that it requires two to make a conversation, and that each must be, in turn, a listener; but no one can be an agreeable companion, who is not as willing to listen as to talk.

Selfishness shows itself in this, as in a thousand other ways; one who is always full of herself, and who considers nothing so important as what she herself thinks, and says, and does, will be apt to engross more than her share of the conversation, even when in the company of those whom she loves.

There are situations, however, wherein it is a kindness to be the chief talker, as when a young lady is the eldest of the party, and has seen something, or

been in some place, the description of which is desired by all around her. If your mind is alive to the wishes and claims of others, you will easily perceive when it is a virtue to talk, and when to be silent. It is undue pre-occupation with self that blinds people, and prevents their seeing what the occasion requires.

Sometimes the most kind and sympathizing person will not do justice to her nature, but will appear to be cold and inattentive, because she does not know that it is necessary to give some sign that she is attending to what is addressed to her. She averts her eye from the speaker, and listens in such profound silence, and with a countenance so immoveable, that no one could suppose her to be at all interested by what she is hearing. This is very discouraging to the speaker, and very unpolite. Good manners require that you should look at the person who speaks to you, and that you should put in a word, or a look, from time to time, that will indicate your interest in the narrative. A few interjections happily thrown in by the hearer, are a great comfort and stimulus to the speaker; and one who has always been accustomed to this evidence of sympathy or comprehension in her friends, feels, when listened to without it, as if she were talking to a dead wall.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VISITS.

USES OF CEREMONY.—MORNING CALLS.—FRIENDLY VISITS.
 —CONFORMITY TO FAMILY RULES. — A SNARE TO BE
 AVOIDED.—RECEIVING AND RETURNING CALLS.—TROUBLE
 OF DOMESTICS.—NEATNESS IN YOUR CHAMBER.—
 CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES BY MARRIAGE.—MISTAKES
 OF THE RICH.—USEFULNESS OF YOUNG GIRLS.—A
 CAUTION.—CONFIDENCE BETWEEN HOST AND GUEST.

VISITS may be either ceremonious or friendly, and, in populous places, the one are as necessary as the other. Some persons have a great dread of ceremony, as if it implied a sacrifice of sincerity and simplicity ; but the thing meant by it is merely an established rule for regulating little particulars of conduct, in which all are desirous of doing what is expected of them, but would not know what that was, unless there was such a guide. These usages vary in different places, but it is easy to ascertain what they are, and then, by conforming to them, you are sure to do right.

However laughable it may appear to some persons to see bits of pasteboard, with names on them, left at the doors of houses, it is a most convenient custom, and the only way of being sure that your call will be known to your friend, for no domestic can be expected to remember a number of strange names given verbally in one morning. All such usages have a meaning and a use, and grow out of the necessities of populous places. Etiquette is intended to save us from some of the inconveniences attendant on a large acquaintance ; and, by settling certain points, it enables us to keep up a ceremonious acquaintance with a circle too large for friendly visiting, as that consumes far

more time than can be spared. All innocent customs should be welcomed, which prevent the waste of time, and allow a person to choose the best way of employing it.

As a general rule, it is safe and proper to conform to the customs of the place you live in. All calls should be returned, and the more promptly this is done, the more polite you will be considered. Where it is the fashion to call at a house after having been invited to a party there, make it a rule to do so. The reason should be a very cogent one that induces you to neglect any of these established forms of politeness; at the same time you should receive the omissions of others with complacency. Be strict with yourself, and indulgent to others. To be tenacious on points of etiquette, is a sign of a little mind; the most noble natures are the most placable, and if any one would act up to her Christian profession, in small matters as well as in great, she must overlook omissions, pay visits she does not owe, invite the negligent, and never listen to the suggestions of pride, suspicion, or jealousy, in regulating her intercourse with the world.

Many persons consider a morning call made upon a mere acquaintance, as an utter waste of time. To those who feel so about it, it probably is just such a vain thing. But a truly benevolent mind, and one richly stored and well balanced, even in a short morning visit to a person almost a stranger, will find some topic of general interest on which to speak, and will say something worth remembering, or call forth something from others that is interesting and edifying. A book, a picture, a flower, a child, may furnish an occasion for thought and feeling, which, properly expressed, stamps a value on the call. Its duration should depend in part on the turn which conversation takes; if that is agreeable, the visit may exceed the quarter of an hour usually allotted to the purpose; if not, let that suffice.

Nothing but a quick perception of the feelings of others, and a ready sympathy with them, can regulate the thousand little proprieties that belong to visits of condolence and congratulation. There is one hint, however, as regards the former, which may perhaps be useful, and that is, not to touch upon the cause of affliction, unless the mourner leads the way to it; and if a painful effort is made to appear cheerful, and to keep aloof from the subject, it is best to make the call a very short one.

Friendly visits, not being subject to the rules of etiquette, are regulated by the character of the individual, and are therefore more fruitful in mistakes. The most common errors are a want of due consideration for the time and engagements of others, and a want of candour in letting a friend know that her visit is unwelcome. If your intimates are not to be told at the door that you are engaged, but enter your apartments at all times, they should learn from yourself, that there are days when you are too busy to see any one.

Young ladies staying at the houses of friends much older than themselves, are in danger of doing many things which will annoy their host and hostess; however amiable their characters, and agreeable their manners, there will be little points on which they never thought, and cannot therefore be expected to do exactly right.

If it be your first visit from home, you cannot be aware of the difference there is in the customs of different families, and cannot therefore be too watchful to find them out, nor too careful to conform to them. If your habits at home are those of order, neatness, and punctuality, you will not disturb the lady of the house by any very careless tricks; but if such are not your habits, you can scarcely make yourself so agreeable as to atone for the numerous vexations you will cause her. An inexperienced girl, however well trained at

home, will make mistakes enough on first leaving it to need all the indulgence of her elders, and therefore a few hints upon this subject may be acceptable.

When there are young people in the house about the same age as the visiter, it is easier for her to find occupation and amusement, independent of the heads of the family, than where there are none; but in that case, care should be taken to find out whether the plans they lay, and the pleasures they propose, are agreeable to the parents, before the guest surrenders herself to their guidance. Some daughters take advantage of having a young friend staying with them, to transgress some of the family rules, and by leading her to do the same, make it appear to be wholly her fault. This applies particularly to late hours at night, and to want of punctuality at breakfast and family worship. When visiting, therefore, it is best always to ascertain from the lady of the house, what are the usual hours of rising, retiring, taking meals, &c., and then conform scrupulously to them, whether the younger members of the household do so or not.

Be careful to interfere as little as possible with the regular avocations of the family; and, by having your work or book always at hand, make it easy to them to leave you alone whenever it best suits their convenience to do so. When you can aid in the performance of any of their daily duties, you will show your readiness to do so; but be sure not to urge your offers of assistance where it is not wanted.

Make a point of being ready to receive those calls which are made on you, and of remembering and returning every one in due season. To ensure this, where the society is large, it is necessary to begin at once and keep a list of all your visitors, or you may omit some one, which is a great breach of politeness, and involves your friends in the blame; though you ought never to throw on them the burden of remem-

bering what calls you have had. Your time should be so far at the disposal of those you are staying with, as to keep you from making any engagements without consulting them; and great care should be taken not to involve them in an intimacy or acquaintance that does not suit them.

No one can stay in another person's house without adding something to the work of it; and constant consideration of others is necessary to prevent that something from becoming burdensome, either to the friends themselves, or to the domestics. Do not imagine that because you are not at home, you are not responsible for the neatness of the chamber you occupy: whether your accommodations are large or small, your things should be put away as snugly as possible.

If the house of your friend is furnished in a style superior to your own, take especial care not to misuse her things, and mistrust your own knowledge of what will injure them.

The marriages of schoolmates and intimate friends often leads to a great difference in their style of living; and as the intercourse, founded on affection, should never be influenced by the circumstance of having a few more or a few less pounds, it is well to know how we ought to conduct ourselves towards those who are wanting, as well as towards those who abound, in the riches of this world. There is often more satisfaction to be found in visiting a friend who has made what the world calls a poor match, than in following a rich bride to her sumptuous halls; in sharing "humble toils and destiny obscure," than in joining with the giddy throng that flock around the favourite of fortune; and if you have the command of money, there cannot be a more agreeable way of disposing of a portion of it, than by supplying some of the deficiencies in your friend's establishment, after finding out what would be most acceptable to her.

The rich are often less generous than they might be, because their habits prevent their comprehending the situation of those who are less affluent, and yet live comfortably. A person of great wealth writing, at Christmas, to a friend who is in narrow circumstances, will express her regret that she has nothing pretty enough to send her; now such an one ought to know, that an useful present, if not very pretty, would be acceptable; and if the season of the year suggested the idea of presents, she should have made a point of being provided with something both useful and pretty to send her friend.

It is in the power of young girls to make themselves very dear and very useful to their married friends, and to render them such services as are beyond all price. In times of sickness and of sorrow, the sympathy and presence of a beloved female friend are among the best of heaven's gifts; whilst she who ministers to the afflicted is as much blessed as blessing. Let no young person stay away from a friend who is sick or in affliction, from the fear that her inexperience will render her company undesirable; all who have strong affections, and a ready power of sympathy, can make themselves acceptable, and, in endeavouring to do so, will increase their own happiness.

Never let mere convenience induce you to stay at the houses of persons whom you cannot esteem; by so doing, you bring on yourself an irksome obligation; you take on yourself the duties of a friend, without having the sentiments that would make their discharge easy.

There is a tacit confidence reposed in all guests, and the greatest delicacy is required, in order to keep it inviolate. Whatever you may have remarked to the disadvantage of your friends, whilst sharing their hospitality, should never transpire. Speak only of what redounds to their praise, or of circumstances which

cannot affect them unpleasantly. Better omit relating the most entertaining event of your visit, than give circulation to anything that will violate the privacy of your friend's family. In like manner, a guest should be protected from the gossip of the world by the friends she visits; and those foibles which are only found out by the intimacy of daily communion, should never be exposed to indifferent persons. Whatever good is there discovered may be commented upon; but let silence cover whatever is amiss.

The attentions which young ladies receive as the guests of those who are older, may always be so graciously accepted and acknowledged, as to show that the guest fully appreciates the hospitality; and as a proof that it is held in remembrance, some little offering of gratitude should be made after the visit. No matter how well supplied your friends may be with the comforts and luxuries of life, nor how small your means are, you can always think of something which you can present and they accept, and though it be only a pin-cushion or a guard-chain, of your own making, it will have a certain value, as the expression of the gratitude which it becomes you to feel.

CHAPTER XIX.

TRAVELLING.

PUNCTUALITY.—PACKING.—SELF-POSSESSION.—ANECDOTE.
—ANOTHER.—AVOID A RUSH.—ANECDOTE OF A FATHER
AND DAUGHTER.

IMPORTANT as punctuality is to the fulfilment of all our social duties, and the improvement of our time, it is especially necessary to the comfort of persons when travelling.

The greatest inconvenience to a whole party is sometimes occasioned by the want of punctuality in a single member of it. Those, therefore, who set out on a journey with friends, should feel that they enter into an agreement to sacrifice their own convenience and pleasure, whenever it would interfere with punctuality; and no lovely prospect, no desirable purchase, no wish to see sights, should prevent your return from a walk at the hour appointed for departure. The necessity of punctuality at meals, and at the fixed hours agreed on by all, should be so prominent an idea, that the pen should be thrown down, though only a line be wanting to complete the day's journal: the arrangements of dress should be calculated to a nicety, and any readjustment postponed, that would interfere with being ready at the time prescribed. Young ladies who are not punctual, think it a sufficient excuse, to say they could not be ready sooner, because they had to mend a glove, or put on new strings to a cap, or to get something out of their trunk after they had fastened it down; but all such excuses are wholly inadmissible. The determination to be true to our engagements should be so absolute, as to make us provide against all such con-

tingencies, by beginning our operations so early as to leave us time for accidents, or time to spare. The unpunctual never allow themselves time enough, and the only way to cure themselves of this fault in judgment is, to begin by allowing themselves double the portion they think they shall need; and if, when entirely ready, they have any time left, to use it in the best way they can. Nothing wears more on the spirits of those who are the heads of the party, than want of punctuality in the younger members of it; I have known the whole pleasure of a day marred in this way, by the fault of one.

The art of packing a trunk well is very necessary to the comfort of travelling. It enables a person to carry many more things in a given space, than can be done without it; it prevents your clothes being injured or tumbled, and helps you to find what you want, without deranging the whole contents of your trunk. It is too much of a practical affair to be taught by written rules; but if you can only be impressed with the desirableness of understanding it, you can learn it from some experienced friend. Those persons acquire it most readily, who have a correct eye for form and space, and, therefore, one who knows how to draw, will learn to pack more easily than one who never measured distances by her eye.

It is a good rule in travelling, never to unpack your trunk unnecessarily, but to keep those things on the top that you will need first; and when you are to set off early in the morning, to pack your trunk the night before, and leave out only such things as can be put in your carpet-bag.

It is best not to put your watch under your pillow at night, unless you are always in the habit of doing so, and can depend on yourself for not forgetting it in the morning.

Self-possession in the time of difficulty, is an im-

portant quality of the mind, and can be very successfully cultivated. I have known very timid children to become, by proper self-discipline, calm and courageous in danger, and to acquire, by degrees, that presence of mind which has often been the means of preserving life. No one is fit to travel, who has not acquired enough of it to refrain from screaming when alarmed. Whatever the feelings may be, there should be sufficient self-command to keep silence; for in many situations the danger is greatly increased by the shrieks of women; as in the case of runaway horses, the collision of coaches, or of boats, &c. I recollect an instance of a coachman's life being sacrificed, in consequence of a lady's screams.

A mother and daughter returning home from a morning ride in their own carriage, were alarmed by perceiving that the horses were unruly, and immediately the young lady began to scream; this frightened the horses, and rendered them entirely unmanageable; the coachman was thrown from his seat, and so severely injured, that he died in a few days. The ladies were not hurt, but they had the pain of hearing the dying man say, that he should have managed the horses, "if Miss Louisa had not screamed so." What a sad recollection to carry through life!

The reverse of this was the experience of another lady of my acquaintance. She was going through the streets of a large city in her own carriage, and stopped at the entrance of a lane, down which she sent her coachman on an errand, without giving him an opportunity of placing some one at the horses' heads; before the man returned, the horses trotted slowly off. The lady had sufficient presence of mind to make no outcry, but simply beckoned to the people passing by to come to her aid; for some time no one noticed her, and her horses, having taken the direction of home, began to quicken their pace; the danger increased every moment,

still they were not alarmed by any noise within the carriage, and at last some observed there was no coachman on the box, and stopped them before any accident occurred. A lady addicted to screaming might have been seriously injured, if not killed, by the horses running away at full speed, and dashing the carriage against something in their way.

It is for the most part safer to remain in a carriage, when the horses run away with it, than to attempt to get out whilst it is in motion; and better not to put the head or arms out of the windows, but to sit quietly within, with your arms close to your body; and then, if the carriage is overturned, you will run less risk of breaking your limbs, than you would if you were holding on with all your might.

The various kinds of danger to which one is subject, in steam-boat accidents, make it difficult to say beforehand what course is best; but there is one general rule which may be given, and that is, never to join in a rush to any one part of the boat. By keeping aloof, and retaining your self-possession, you will be ready to take advantage of whatever may occur; whereas, by following the crowd, you are liable to be infected by their panic, and to be hurried into some imprudent step.

I am acquainted with a young lady, who escaped much suffering by adhering to this rule. She and her father were on board a steam-boat, when it ran against another vessel, and was so much injured as to sink rapidly. There was a general rush of all the passengers to the bows of the boat; she alone remained at the stern with her father; both were perfectly calm, and provided themselves with buoyant articles to assist them in floating, when it should become necessary to commit themselves to the water. Whilst thus aloof from the crowd, a little boat approached; the father hailed it,

and in a few moments, he and his daughter were safely placed in it, and rowed towards the shore. No lives were eventually lost; but other persons suffered much more before they were taken off, than this young lady, who never lost her presence of mind, but acted from the first according to the fixed principles inculcated by her father.

CHAPTER XX.

MENTAL CULTURE.

A CONVERSATION ON USEFULNESS.—PERIODICAL LITERATURE UNFIT FOR THE YOUNG.—READING WITH AN OBJECT DESIRABLE.—APPLICATIONS FOR AID.—STUDY OF HISTORY.—EXERCISE IN COMPOSITION.—BRITISH POETS.—SENTIMENT AND MORALITY.—CONCLUSION.

So much time is ordinarily wasted in the life of a young lady, that few are aware how much might be accomplished by a scrupulous economy of minutes and a methodical appropriation of hours. But, believing as I do that there is time enough for the performance of every domestic duty, and for the cultivation of the mind also, I would warn my young friends against sacrificing one to the other. Some persons make an arbitrary division of things into useful and ornamental, and class mental culture under the latter head. This mistake was so well combated by a friend of mine, aged twenty, in conversation with a girl of eighteen, that I will relate what passed. Sarah, the elder one, had been talking to Anna about reading and studying, when the latter said with a sigh, “Well, I cannot expect to be like you; Nature meant me to be only useful.”

Sarah. I should be very sorry if I thought she had not made me for the same purpose.

Anna. O, you are above being useful. You were meant to be ornamental; everybody is willing you should be so; few can be like you, for few can boast of such attainments, and those who can are not expected to be useful.

Sarah. What do you mean by being useful?

Anna. O, you know, fulfilling one's duty in the common relations of life.

Sarah. Do I neglect that?

Anna. No, I would not say that, but you do not put your whole mind into it.

Sarah. Why should I, if I have mind enough for that and other things too?

Anna. Well, you are more ornamental than useful, at any rate.

Sarah. It seems to me that you strangely limit the term useful.

Anna. Well, but, after all, Sarah, of what great use are all your accomplishments? They make you very independent, I know, and much admired by certain persons; but then they render insipid other society, in which they are not appreciated, and from which you can gain nothing; and what good do they do anybody but yourself?

Sarah. I think they do some good, when they make my father and brothers like to be at home and talk with me. You have often complained that you could not make home attractive to your father and brothers, and lamented the ennui of the one, and the idle amusements of the other. As to its making the sort of society of which you speak insipid to me, I know that although you spend so much time in it, it is as disagreeable to you as it is wearisome to me. You are always bringing me stories of the calumnies which are afloat about you and your friends. Now, I say that much of this wicked gossiping arises from idleness, and that if these people's minds were better furnished, their tongues would be less venomous.

Anna. But if we can do nothing for this society, ought we to withdraw ourselves wholly from it?

Sarah. If we cannot raise its tone, I think it may be of some use to bear a quiet testimony that we can find some better way of passing our time than in tasteless,

childish amusements, the monotony of which is only relieved by the most malicious backbiting.

Anna. I wish I could think as you do, but I have always been afraid, that if I were very cultivated, I should not be so useful.

Sarah. If you enlarge your views of utility, you will perhaps see that we promote it no less by ministering to the spiritual than the temporal wants of others. I cannot consider the person who communicates a beautiful thought, enriches me with a valuable truth, or leads me to take more liberal views of the capacity of the soul or the value of time, as less *useful* than those who make jellies, and watch with me in illness, or take me to ride, and entertain me with their best cheer, when I am well. Let none of us neglect the common duties of our spheres; but if any hours be left, can we employ them better than in acquiring a knowledge of the laws of God's world, and the minds and history of his creatures? Are we not thus fitting ourselves to perform the highest kind of duty towards each other? I do believe, that if we judiciously manage our time on earth, short though it be, there will be sufficient to enable us to be useful in the highest sense of that term, as well as in the sense in which you use it.

A great many very good people limit the sense of the word *useful* as Anna did; but as well might we question what the use is to the body of each portion of food it receives, as to doubt that knowledge, properly taken into the mind, conduces to its strength and enlargement.

There is another class, who value intellectual attainments very highly, but not on the true ground; not because they increase our usefulness and happiness; not because we have immortal souls, that crave knowledge as the body does food; but merely as the means of succeeding in society, for the poor purpose of *display*.

She who reads merely for the sake of talking about a book with which others are acquainted, or that she may embellish her conversation with quotations, or because it is expected that she should know certain facts and names in history, will miss the true end of all study, and will be unable effectually to reproduce any of the ideas so taken in.

Very young ladies should not aim at being acquainted with the periodical literature of the day, nor with the various new books which they hear their elder friends conversing about. Their leisure should be chiefly given to standard works in their own language, or the study of classic authors in foreign tongues. Life is too short, and time too precious, and books too numerous, to allow of your reading a work in order to ascertain whether it be worth the perusal. It is wise to profit by the experience of others in this respect, and to read only such books as are well recommended.

A course of reading, undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining some particular points in history, or by way of testing some theory in morals, or for any specific object, will improve the mind more than years of aimless reading. If you consult the works alluded to by the authors you are studying, and acquire all the collateral information which belongs to any subject that engages your attention, you will find your interest to increase as you trace the connexion, and that ideas, thus followed out, become a part of your own mind, and suggest new thoughts and feelings.

It should be a rule with you never to pass over a word you do not know, or a thing you do not understand, without either looking for its explanation in dictionaries, encyclopædias, &c., or making a note of it in a little book, kept for the purpose, that you may inquire its meaning of the first person you meet with who is competent to give it.

Many persons take a dislike to history, from having studied it only in the abridgments used in schools; whereas the voluminous accounts given of the same events, and which are shunned as a heavy task, would prove far more entertaining. The more you read about some things, the more interested you become, and this is particularly the case with respect to history. When you are familiar with certain scenes and characters, you will desire to know additional particulars concerning them.

There are so many entertaining biographies and memoirs which may be read in connexion with English history, that it must prove a high treat, an intellectual feast, to any mind prepared to enjoy it. After reading two or three short histories, so as to have a general idea of the progress of events, it is well to take a more copious history, and read the biographies of great characters, in connexion with the times in which they flourished. The various memoirs, too, should be read in the same way. The history should be considered as a skeleton, which is to be filled out by all the collateral information you can procure. Shakspeare's historical plays and Scott's historical novels may be read to great advantage in connexion with the history of the period to which they belong.

Written abstracts of what you read will not only assist your memory in recollecting dates and facts, but will aid you in arranging, comparing, and reflecting upon what you have acquired. They should be frequently referred to, and occasionally studied very thoroughly, if you would reap the full benefit of them.

Whenever you are reading or studying, take care to have within your reach gazetteers, maps, biographical charts, dictionaries, encyclopædias, &c., and never grudge the time that you spend in consulting them.

However irksome may have been the writing of themes at school, you cannot relinquish the frequent exercise of the mind in composition, without neglecting one of the most important means of mental culture. Nothing is a greater help to accuracy of statement, and accuracy of thought. Those who are unaccustomed to this exercise may begin by writing down the thoughts of others from memory; a sermon or a lecture, a conversation or a passage from a book, will furnish a topic. In the last case, the novice can compare her composition with the original, and so correct it. The more various the subjects you treat of, the more useful will be the exercise; and if the labour of composition be irksome to you, there can be no stronger proof that your mind requires the discipline. It should be remembered, that, however valuable these compositions are, as exercises of the young mind, they seldom have any intrinsic merit, and should, therefore, be kept to yourself, and destroyed when they have answered their purpose.

Every well-educated person must be acquainted with the great poets who have adorned and enriched the literature of England. Always read the life of an author in connexion with his works, if you would fully understand and appreciate them; but beware of surrendering your mind passively to what the biographer may think of his subject. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* is a celebrated work, and one worthy of an attentive perusal in connexion with the British Poets; but it contains many of that great author's prejudices, and some examples of flagrant injustice, against which the reader should be on his guard.

Your course of reading should be partly determined by the interest excited in your mind by accidental circumstances and conversations. When you have heard an animated discussion of the merits of certain standard

works, with which you are unacquainted, that is the time to read them, whilst your mind is all alive to the subject.

Works of sentiment and morality are so numerous, and of so mixed a character, that, whilst great care is necessary in making a wise selection, the number of good ones is too large to render a list of them necessary.

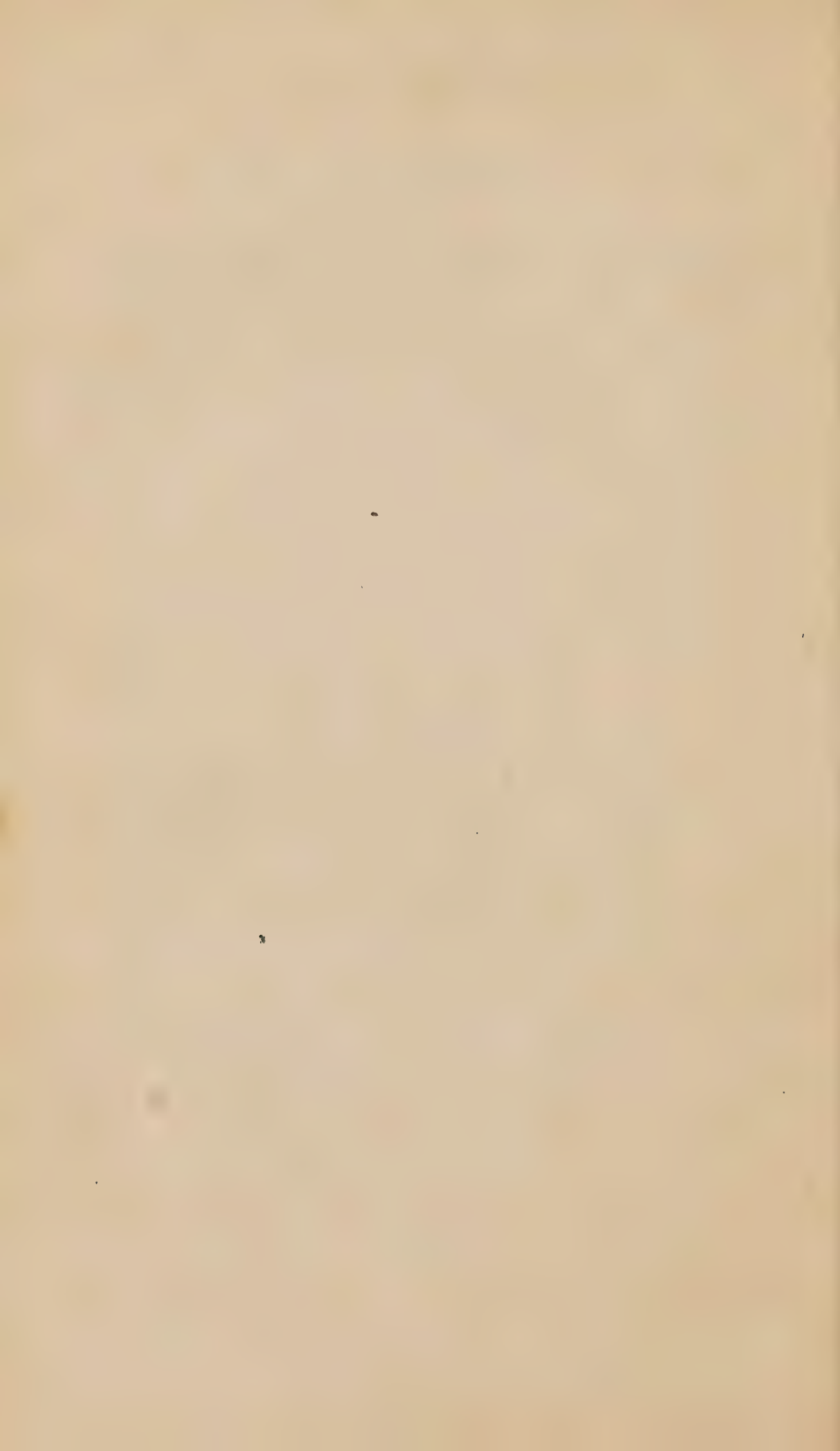
CONCLUSION.

I HOPE that no one can have read the preceding pages without perceiving that I consider all true happiness to depend on the faithful performance of duty, and all duty to be based upon love to God and love to man; that, where these affections fill the heart, they show themselves in the smallest as well as the greatest affairs of life; that nothing is too trifling to be referred to those two great principles, and that it is with a view to making the most of life, under those influences, that I inculcate the value of time, the advantages of method, the happiness of virtue, the healthfulness of constant, vigorous action, both of body and mind, and the importance of choosing nicely between the various occupations which life presents.

The hints which I proposed giving to young ladies on leaving school have now filled a volume, the size of which may look sufficiently formidable in their eyes, and yet the half has not been said of what would be useful advice to them. The subject embraces so wide a field, that no single volume can do more than touch on a few topics. I have chosen the most obvious, because they are of most frequent recurrence, and must leave the rest, in the hope that those whose attention has been arrested by what is here said, will follow out for themselves these suggestions, and that they will apply the principles here laid down to the thousand other particulars which should be regulated by them.

THE END.

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